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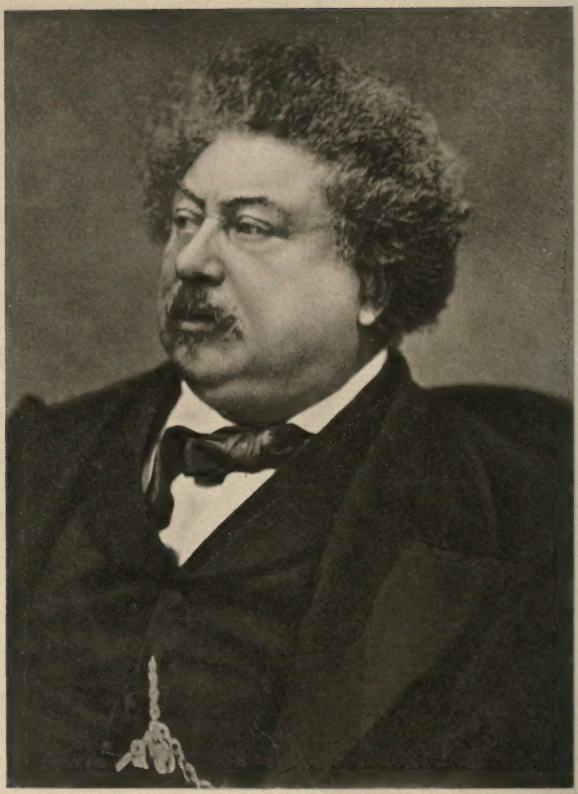
MY MEMOIRS

BY

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

IN SIX VOLUMES



Alexandre Dumas

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MY MEMOIRS

BY

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

Bibliothèque Nationale

TRANSLATED BY

E. M. WALLER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

ANDREW LANG

VOL. VI

1832 TO 1833

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

METHUEN & CO.
36 ESSEX STREET, W.C.
LONDON

PRESENTATION COPY

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THE MEMOIRS OF ALEXANDRE DUMAS

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

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CARNIVAL time was drawing near, and the suggestion Bocage had made that I should give a ball spread abroad throughout the artist world, and was flung back at me on all sides. One of the first difficulties which arose was the question of the smallness of my lodgings—my rooms comprised a dining-room, sitting-room, bedroom and study, which, however adequate in size for a dwelling, were too limited for a party. A ball, given by me, necessitated three or four hundred invitations; and how could I have three or four hundred people in a dining-room, drawing-room, bedroom and study? Happily I bethought myself of a set of four rooms on the same landing, not only empty, but still void of all decoration—

except for the mirrors above the chimney-pieces, and the blue-grey paper which covered the walls. I asked the landlord's permission to use this set of rooms for the purpose of the ball I intended to give. It was granted me. Next came the question of decorating the rooms. This was the business of my artist friends. Hardly did they know that I needed them before they came and offered me their services. There were four rooms to decorate, and they shared the task between them. The decorators were no other than Eugène Delacroix, Louis and Clément Boulanger, Alfred and Tony Johannot, Decamps, Grandville, Jadin, Barye, Nanteuil — our first painters, in fact. Ciceri undertook the ceilings. The question arose as to whether the subject should be from a novel or from a play of each of the authors who would be there. Eugène Delacroix undertook to paint King Rodrigo after the defeat of the Guadalêté, a subject taken from the *Romancero*, translated by Emile Deschamps ; Louis Boulanger chose a scene from *Lucrèce Borgia* ; Clément Boulanger, a scene from the *Tour de Nesle* ; Tony Johannot, a scene from the *Sire de Giac* ; Alfred Johannot, a scene from *Cinq-Mars* ; Decamps promised a Debureau in a cornfield studded with poppies and corn-flowers ; Grandville took a panel twelve feet long by eight feet wide, in which he undertook to reproduce all our professions in a picture representing an orchestra of thirty or forty musicians, some clanging cymbals, others shaking Chinese hats, some blowing on horns and bassoons, others scraping on violins and violoncellos. There were, besides, animals at play above each door.

Barye took upon himself the window frames : lions and tigers as large as life formed these supports. Nanteuil did the surroundings, the ornamentations and the panels of the doors. This point settled, it was decided that, four or five days before the ball, Ciceri should stretch the canvases on the walls and bring paint-brushes, measures and colours. When the artists had begun their work, they were not to leave it except to go to bed : they were to

be fed and provided with drink in the house. The collation was to consist of three items.

There now remained a thing of the highest importance to attend to, namely, supper. I thought of providing the main foundation of this with game killed by my own hand; this would be both a pleasure and an economy. I went in search of M. Deviolaine, who gave me leave to shoot over the forest of la Ferté-Vidame. This was the more delightful as my old friend Gondon was inspector of it, and I was very sure he would not grudge a roebuck more or less. Furthermore, the permission included some friends as well as myself. I invited Clerjon de Champagny, Tony Johannot, Géniole and Louis Boulanger. My brother-in-law and nephew were to set out from Chartres and to turn up at the appointed hour at la Ferté-Vidame. I gave Gondon two days' notice in advance, so that he could procure the necessary beaters, and it was arranged that we should stop the night at an inn, the address of which he gave me; that we should sleep there; that we should shoot the whole of the following day, and that, according as we were too tired or not, we should either leave that evening or the next morning. We were to make the journey in a huge *berline* which, somehow or other, I happened to possess. Everything decided upon was carried out punctiliously. We started between nine and ten in the morning. We reckoned upon arriving about six or seven in the evening, but snow overtook us when a third of our journey was done, and, instead of arriving at seven, it was midnight before we got there, and we had not had anything to warm us the whole of that long journey except the never-failing wit and charming spirits of Champagny, to which, as an accompaniment, was joined the noise of a tin trumpet which he had bought somewhere or other, I know not for what purpose, its droll sound affording the boon of making us shout with laughter.

When we arrived, we naturally found everybody asleep; at la Ferté-Vidame they go to bed at ten in summer and eight

in winter. We set foot on a magnificent carpet of snow, which reminded me of the wolf-hunts of my youth, with my old friends M. Deviolaine and the gamekeepers. How many things had happened between the snows of 1817 and those of 1832 and had melted away even as they! We looked like those who knocked at the outbuildings of the Castle of the Sleeping Beauty; nobody answered us, and, as we were getting more and more benumbed, I was already beginning to talk of breaking in the door of the inn, as I had at M. Dupont-Delporte's country-house, when, from the other side of the door, I heard my nephew's voice. He was exactly the age that I was when going shooting kept me from sleeping—poor boy, he has since died! Half awake from the pleasure to which he was looking forward in the next day's sport he woke up completely at the racket we made, at our desperate cries and, especially, at the sound of Champagny's trumpet. He exerted himself inside as we did outside, to rouse the hotel people from their beds. Finally, swearing, scolding, crotchety, a man got up, calling upon heaven to know if this was the hour to wake honest people. The door opened and the host's bad temper calmed down a little when he saw we had come by post-chaise! That made it justifiable for him to be disturbed at night, and, thenceforward, we were well received. My brother-in-law had not been able to come. Émile, my nephew, was alone, and he had naturally taken the best room in the house, by virtue of his right as first arrival. It was immediately pointed out to him that, being at the age when one can eat anything, he was also, naturally, at the age when one gets the worst beds and cold rooms. His room had a splendid fireplace, in which burned the remains of a fire which I tended with the conscientiousness of a vestal, until they brought a load of wood. It was a large room; we held council, and it was unanimously decided to carry the mattresses from the small rooms into the large one; that they should be arranged symmetrically against the wall, and that we should all sleep together. Émile

demanded two things: the honour of being one of the company and the right of putting his ready-made bed on the floor. He had left a store of warmth in his sheets which he did not want to lose. These preliminary arrangements made, we proceeded to supper. Every one was literally dying of hunger, literally, also, there was equally nothing to eat in the inn. We visited the henhouse: the fowls had obligingly laid a score of eggs. That made four eggs apiece; we each had one egg boiled, two in an omelette and one in the salad. There was bread and wine as might be required. I think we never had a merrier supper-party or slept better. At dawn we were awakened by Gondon. He arrived thoroughly equipped for shooting, with his two dogs. Fifteen beaters, engaged the previous day, waited for us at the door. The toilet of a sportsman is quickly made. A huge fire was lit: there was no possibility of eating the remains of the previous night's supper: we had to be contented with a crust of bread dipped in white wine. Besides, Gondon spoke of a cold leg of mutton which would be picked up in passing his house, and which we should eat in the forest round a great fire between two *battues*; this welcome intelligence brought back a smile to the most morose lips. We were shooting a quarter of an hour later. One has one's days of skill as also one's days of courage. Champagny, an excellent shot usually, this day shot like a cab-driver, and attributed his awkwardness to the narrowness of the barrel of his gun. Indeed, I do not know why he shot with a kind of double-barrelled pistol. Tony Johannot was, I believe, a complete novice in matters of shooting. Géniole was a beginner. As for Louis Boulanger, he was accustomed to go shooting pencil in one hand and sketch-book in the other. There were, then, only Gondon and myself, both old sportsmen, and, having long rifles, we found ourselves the kings of the shoot. The shoot does not deserve any special description; nevertheless, an incident happened at it which

has since caused bets in the forest of la Ferté-Vidame, between the forest gamekeepers and the Parisian sportsmen who were my successors. We were placed in a line, as is the custom in a *battue*, and I had chosen for my position the angle made by a little narrow footpath and the main road. I had the path horizontally in front of me, and, behind me, the highroad ran at right angles. On my right was Tony Johannot; on my left, Géniole. The beaters drove the game towards us. Every hunted animal, when it encounters a road, and particularly a footpath, has a propensity to follow the path, which enables it to see and to run more easily. Three roebucks, urged on by the beaters, followed the footpath and came straight for me. Tony Johannot, for whom they were out of range, made violent signs to me, in the belief that I did not see them. I saw them perfectly well, but I had the very ambitious idea fixed in my head of killing all three with two shots. Tony, who did not understand my inaction, increased his signals. Still I let the three roebucks come on. Finally, when nearly thirty paces from me, they stopped short, listening, admirably placed: two crossed their fine, graceful necks over one another, one looking to the right, the other to the left; the third kept a little behind, hidden by the two others. I fired at the first two and brought them down. The third took a leap, but not so quickly as to avoid my second shot. Then I stood in position to reload my rifle, not wishing the whole hunt to be put out for me. In fact, an instant later, a roebuck passed Gondon, and he killed it. Seeing my inaction after my two shots, my companions thought I had missed. However, Géniole, who was on my left, and Tony, who was on my right, asked what had become of the roebucks. The enigma was explained to them by the beaters, who found the three dead bucks thirty paces from me: two in the path,—they had not stirred!—the other, four yards away, in the underwood.

That night, returning at nightfall, a final roebuck was so

ill-advised as to start up before us in a sort of clearing. The sun, a little out of the clouds, was setting literally in a bed of purple; in spite of this amelioration in the weather on the horizon, the snow continued falling round us in thick flakes. Suddenly, a buck bounded off fifteen yards from us. The guns were unloaded, so it was a question for the quickest loader. Ten or a dozen shots went off almost at the same time. The buck disappeared in the midst of the fire and smoke. Dogs and hunters set off in pursuit. I have never seen a more fitting composition for a picture than that which chance had made—Boulanger was in ecstasies! He, not having a gun, could see everything without being distracted. All the night he was haunted by the idea of making a sketch of that scene: he could not forget it. We brought back nine roebucks and three hares; I had, for my share, killed five roebucks and two hares. We dined at Gondon's that night, and we had a very different supper from that of the night before.

We started next day at dawn and, as night fell, we re-entered Paris with our nine bucks hanging from the imperial of our carriage, like a butcher's shop. I summoned Chevet. It was a question of trading by exchange. I wanted an enormous fish: for three bucks, Chevet undertook to provide me with a salmon weighing thirty pounds, or a sturgeon weighing fifty. I wanted a colossal galantine; a fourth buck paid for that. I wished to have two bucks roasted whole; Chevet undertook to get them roasted. The last buck was cut up and distributed among the families of my travelling companions. The three hares provided a pâté. So it will be seen that the shoot, besides the pleasure derived from it, gave us the principal constituents of the supper. The rest was only a matter of attending to detail; this was the business of the staff belonging to the house. In our absence, old Ciceri—do obeisance, all of you, to the old man, just as gay to-day, well-preserved and willing, in spite of his seventy years;

do obeisance to him Séchan, Diéterle, Despléchin, Thierry, Cambon, Devoir, Moinet, you kings, viceroys and princes of modern decorative art : old Ciceri it was who did the cloister of *Robert le Diable* !—in our absence, I say, old Ciceri had had the canvases placed in position and had fixed up the paper. All was ready even to the paints, pencils and brushes. All the rooms were warmed with big fires ; chairs, stools, footstools of all sizes were there, and a folding ladder had been bought. Granville, our good excellent Granville, delightful painter of man, purely as an animal, and of animals with human intelligence, was the first to set to work. He it was, indeed, who had the heaviest task on his hands ; it will be recollected that he was burdened with an immense panel and with the painting of all the top parts above the doors. Alas ! it is sad to think that of those ten artists who put their talent at my disposition, four to-day lie in the tomb ! Of those ten hearts which beat so happily in unison with my own, four are stilled ! Who would have told you then, in that merry workroom which you covered with your paintings, and filled with your laughter, in those three days of talking, during which scintillated incessantly that fascinating wit the secret of which artists alone have the key ; who would have said to you, beloved dead friends ! that, while still young, I should survive you, and that I should pause when mentioning your names to say to myself, ' It is not enough for you, their brother, simply to mention their names ; you ought to relate what they were like as men and artists, their characters and their talents ! " A task both sweet and melancholy it is to speak of the dead that one loves ! Moreover, it is midnight ; the hour for invocation. I am alone, no profane gaze appears through the darkness to scare your sepulchral modesty. Come, brothers ! Come ! Tell me, in the language of the dead, that gentle whisper which is like the stream caressing its banks, the soft sound of leaves rustling in the forest, the gentle

murmur of the breeze sobbing in the reeds, tell me of your life, your sorrows, your hopes and your triumphs, so that the world, nearly always indifferent when it is not ungrateful, may know what you were and, above all, your worth !

CHAPTER II

Alfred Johannot

THE first who appears to me, because he was the first who left us, is pale and sad as he was when living. His hair is cut short, his forehead is prominent, his glance is both gloomy and gentle beneath his thick eyebrows, the moustache and beard are russet-brown, the face long and melancholy. His name is Alfred Johannot, and he has been dead now for sixteen years.

Come, brother! come nearer to me; it is I, a friend who calls thee. Speak, tell, in the tongue of the dead, of thy youth and glorious life, and I will repeat it in the language of the living. Spirits of the night, silence even the shaking of your moth-like wings, that all may be still; even thou, too, O Night—silence, dumb son of darkness! The dead speak low, but I will speak aloud. We have all seen him, young men of twenty-five, men of forty, old men of seventy. Was he not indeed such as I have described him to be? Now, here is his biography.

***

He was born with the century, in 1800; with the spring, on 21 March; he was born in the grand-duchy of Hesse, in the little town of Offenbach, upon the banks of the charming river beloved of fishermen and water-sprites, which men call the Mein, which has its source in Bavaria and which empties itself in the Rhine opposite Mayence. His father was a wealthy merchant of Frankfort, and his ancestors were Protestants whom the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had compelled to take shelter in

foreign countries. After a stay of several years in Lyons, M. Johannot, the father, founded at Frankfort the first great silk factory. Trade, when it reaches the pitch to which he carried it, rises to the elevation of poetry ; besides, he was an excellent painter of flowers and spent his life among artists. In 1806, M. Johannot was ruined and came to settle in Paris. This upheaval, though sad for the parents, was a happy one for Alfred. Every change and all excitement amuses childhood. His mother, who adored him, endeavoured to educate him herself ; from thence, perhaps, came that which throughout his life people took for melancholy, and which was merely the modest sensitiveness of a heart entirely moulded by a woman's hand.

Alfred Johannot was eight years old when they took him to the Louvre the first time. You who read these lines will remember the Louvre under the Empire ? It was the rendezvous of all the finest things in the world ; every masterpiece seemed to have the right to be there, and appeared to be only at home there. He was astounded, deeply moved, dazzled. He went in a child, without any vocation : he came out adolescent and a painter. On his return home, he took to his pencil and never left it again. He had a brother, a clever engraver, Charles Johannot, who died before he did, also young like him, alas ! The age of the three brothers at the time of the death of each scarcely reached that of a mature man. This brother lent him his artist's card of admission to the Louvre and, under the protection of his brother's name, he was able to work there. When they wanted to punish him cruelly they said to him : " Alfred, you shall not go to the Louvre to-morrow." When he was in the Louvre he lived no longer, he did not exist, he was absorbed in his work, and it was in that that he lived and had his being.

One day, alone with his thoughts, as was his habit, genius encouraging him with those sweet whispered words which keep the eyes and lips of youth always in a smile, he was

copying a Raphael, when he felt a hand laid lightly on his shoulder. He turned round and stood confounded. In the centre of a circle of officers in military dress and courtiers in court dress, he stood alone by the side of a man in a very simple uniform. The hand which this man had lightly placed on his shoulder, when pressed on the far ends of the earth made the world reel : it was the hand of Napoleon.

" Courage, my friend ! " a voice, almost as soft as a woman's, said to him.

It was the voice of the Emperor. Then the wonderful man went away, leaving the child pale, dumb, trembling and almost breathless ; but, as he moved away, he inquired who the child was. A secretary stayed behind from the Emperor's suite, came to Alfred, asked him his name and where his parents lived, then rejoined the brilliant group, which disappeared into a neighbouring room.

Some days afterwards, Alfred Johannot's father was appointed inspector of the library at Hamburg, then a French town. The whole family set out for this destination and Alfred was not to see Paris again until 1818. He was never to see the Emperor again ; but the recollection of the scene we have just described remained deeply engraved on the child's memory. I remember one evening, the evening on which he himself told me the story—it was in my rooms—he took up a pen and paper and drew a pen-and-ink sketch of the scene. I never saw a finer portrait of Napoleon, more dignified, greater or more gentle, I will even say more fatherly. In Alfred's thoughts, the Emperor remained as in 1810, beautiful, radiant and victorious !

In default of good masters, the child found excellent engravers at Hamburg ; this is the reason that, as a young man, he preferred at first graving tools to the paint brush. He was thirteen when disaster overtook the Empire. The enemy laid siege to Hamburg ; and Hamburg made up its mind to resist to the very last and, indeed, its defence was a celebrated one.

Alfred three times only just escaped death: by a bullet, by starvation and by typhus fever! One day, when he was on the ramparts, a bullet flew by two yards from him, a little nearer and it would have been the end of him; but he was spared. It was a different matter with starvation and, above all, in the matter of typhus! Hunger weakened his digestion, typhus burned up his blood: hence, the paleness of his cheeks and the fever in his eyes: he died in 1837 from the effects of the famine and fever of 1813.

The whole family, as we have said, returned to Paris in 1818 and settled near Charles, who then did one of his wonderful engravings, *Le Trompette blessé*, by Horace Vernet. The poor people were totally ruined. It was essential that the children they had nourished should, in their turn, look after those who had nourished them.

Alfred set to work at first to make engravings for confectioners and to illuminate images of the saints. This lasted for seven years. It was Charles who brought in the larger contribution to the common purse. He died in 1825, just the same age as was Alfred when he died, thirty-seven. God permitted that, from henceforth, Alfred's powers should increase, on account of the burden which this misfortune laid upon him. A young brother and aged parents—these were the responsibilities which the death of his brother left him!

The world does not sufficiently recognise the story of those saintly struggles of filial love against poverty, but I shall tell the story again and again!

Alfred's life was a strange one! He had no youth and was not to have an old age. The furrows of mature age, which line the careworn brow of the thinker, were engraved upon him by starvation when he was thirteen, by exile and by fatigue they were continued when he was eighteen, and poverty took up the task when he was twenty-five.

"Did you, who knew him, ever see him smile?"

"No." And yet this gravity had nothing in it of the

melancholy of disgust or of despair; it was the calm of resignation.

The first plate which he published—for he began by devoting himself to engraving: feeling himself to be feeble he sought some support on which to lean—was that of Scheffer's *Orphelins*. This publication brought him the patronage of Gérard. In the first instance, this master entrusted him with a scene from *Ourika*, then the reproduction of his great picture of *Louis XIV. présentant Philippe V. aux ambassadeurs d'Espagne*. From that moment Alfred Johannot became known. It was the period when English publications introduced the taste for illustrations into France. Since Moreau, junior, who had admirably reproduced the pictures of the age of Louis XIV., and particularly those of the time of Louis XV., there was not a more distinguished engraver in France than Alexandre Desenne. Alfred went to him and asked to be allowed to study under his direction. Genius is simple, kind and friendly: Desenne gave him excellent advice. Then Desenne died, and the only well-known engraver who was left was Achille Devéria—You knew that fine intellect? that fecund producer, who, having to choose between genius, which leaves people to die of hunger, and talent, which can support a family, tore himself weeping from the disconsolate embraces of genius, flinging in its arms as a substitute his brother Eugène. Some day I will tell his story as I am telling Alfred's, and I will compel the jeering and ungrateful world to bow its head before the pious son, the industrious father, who, by working sixteen hours a day, kept a whole family in comfort.

O Devéria, how noble wert thou in God's sight when thou didst deny thyself the chance of becoming as great in the eyes of men as thou couldst have been!

But, soon, Devéria left painting and engraving for lithography. Then, Alfred assumed the first position in book illustration, which his brother was soon to share

and to whom he abandoned it altogether when he was dying.

During all this time, Tony had been growing up under the protection of that friendship which had in it both the intimacy of brotherhood and the protective tenderness of fatherhood. And, from the time when the young life became connected with that of Alfred, there was no separation: the figurative phrases about ivy and elms, creepers and oaks, would seem to have been conceived with these two artists in view. One day, death broke down the eldest; but the survivor was left, with his roots springing from the grave of the one who was dead. For, indeed, from the moment when they joined forces together, they kept the same step and pace, until it was impossible to say which was ahead of the other. Tony blended into Alfred, became an engraver with the engraver, designer and painter with the designer and painter, forming the unique spectacle of a triple fraternity of blood, mind and talent. It was not as on the playbills of a theatre, where the name of the oldest in art precedes that of the younger: one as often spoke of Alfred and Tony as of Tony and Alfred. Like the inseparable Siamese twins, a moment came when they themselves wished to separate, but could not do so. And thus, for ten years, the history of one is that of the other. One can no more separate this history than, one league from Lyons, one can separate the Saône from the Rhone; or, a league from Mayence, the Moselle from the Rhine. When they depended on one another they felt themselves to be strong. It was no longer the drawings of others that they engraved, but their own. Aquafortis engraving became their favourite process; and it was at this time that the vignettes of Walter Scott, of Cooper and of Byron appeared. All the great literary names bore their signature. There is little poetry scattered over the world the illustrations to which have not been traced by their graving tools.

Then, marvellous to relate, each of them dreamed of still greater glory; from copyists, they became engravers; from engravers, they decided to make themselves painters. It was no longer from designs that they executed their aquafortis work: it was after the charming little pictures in the Salon of 1831—so remarkable that we returned two or three times to see them—that they exhibited their plates, which were placed, I recollect, in the embrasure of a window of the great gallery to the left. There were twenty-four compositions. From that moment, each became both artist and engraver at one and the same time.

Let us follow Alfred; we shall return to Tony later. In 1831 Alfred did his first great easel painting: *L'Arrestation de Jean Crespière.* This was a success. The same year he finished *Don Juan naufragé* and a scene from *Cinq-Mars.*

In 1832 and 1833 he produced *L'Annonce de la Victoire de Hastenbeck* for King Louis-Philippe's gallery, and *L'Entrée de Mademoiselle de Montpensier, pendant la Fronde, à Orléans;* in 1834, *François Ier et Charles Quint;* in 1835, *Le Courrier Vernet saigné et pansé par le roi Louis-Philippe,—Henri II., Catherine de Médicis et leurs enfants;* in 1836, *Marie Stuart quittant l'Ecosse,—Anne d'Este, Duchesse de Guise se presentant à la cour de Charles IX.,—Saint Martin,*—and *La bataille de Saint-Jacques.*

But during the last two years nature had been exhausted in Alfred; he succumbed under a final effort. He recognised his condition, and knew that when the finger of time pointed to the early months of the winter of 1837 the hour of eternity would strike for him. So the last eighteen months of his life are prodigious in activity: pictures, vignettes, water-colours, aquafortis, wood-engravings, pencil sketches, pen-and-ink drawings, he undertook everything, hurried on and carried all through. A lifetime would scarcely have been enough

to finish what he had begun, and he only had a few months!

In the midst of this feverish output, this agonising productiveness, he received a letter from Mannheim. It was from his sister; his father was ill and desired to see him. He announced his departure; it was in vain for people to tell him that, however seriously ill his father might be, his father was not so ill as he was himself; that the old man had longer to live than the young man: he did not listen to anything; his father called for him and he felt he must go! He went, he remained absent three months from Paris and returned late in November. His father was out of danger; but he was dying. On 7 December 1837, he died, with his sketches, tools and vignettes on his bed and his eyes fixed on his unfinished pictures!

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The phantom has just ceased speaking. Then, turning in its direction I said to it: It was so, brother, was it not? Have I translated thy words well? But I saw nothing more than a white vapour which faded away, I heard nothing but a faint sigh, which was lost in the air after having articulated the word "Yes!"

CHAPTER III

Clément Boulanger

THE whisper dies away and the shade disappears. Another shade comes out of the ground and advances as silently as the first, but with a more rapid step. One felt that, in this case, to some extent, the life had been more bright and that death had suddenly taken this being into its naked embrace without giving notice beforehand, as it had done in the case of poor Alfred.

This shade was the painter of the picture entitled *Mort d'Henri II.* and of the *Procession du Corpus Domini.* Short chestnut hair, a rather narrow but intelligent forehead, blue eyes, long nose, fair moustaches and beard, complexion fresh and clear, dead lips smiling at life as in life they had smiled at death : this was the shade of Clément Boulanger. He bowed his tall figure towards me and I felt his breath touch my brow, like the kiss of a friend after a long journey. He kissed me on his return from death.

Poor Clément ! He was so bright, so witty, while he was painting in great washes the scene from the *Tour de Nesle* representing Buridan " flung into the Seine," as Villon says, and borrowed from the *Écolier de Cluny* by Roger de Beauvoir.

" Friend," I say to him, " I knew but little of your life and still less of your death. You lived and died far away from me. You rest beneath the cypresses of Scutari, with the sky of the Bosphorus stretched above your head and the Sea of Marmora breaking at your feet ; the blue doves come in at the half-opened windows of your chapel

and circle round your tomb like loved friends! Tell me what I do not know, so that I may relate it to the generation which never knew you."

I seemed to see a spark light up in the hollow eyes of the phantom, and a kind of smile pass over the pale lips. Life is so good a thing, whatever people say about it, that the dead tremble every time a living being pronounces their names.

He spoke and I, in my turn, trembled in astonishment to hear merry words coming from the mouth of a phantom.

He died without knowing he was going to die; his last convulsion was a laugh and his last words a song.

***

Clément Boulanger was born in 1812. His mother during pregnancy was possessed by a singular desire: no matter what happened, she wanted to take lessons in painting. They procured her a master and she indulged in the pleasure of daubing away at five or six canvases. Although the craving was satisfied, the child was *marqué* (stamped) as midwives call it: as soon as he could talk, he asked for a pencil; at the age of four, everything sat for him, cats, dogs, parrots, chimney-sweeps, errand-boys and water-carriers. At eight, he was sent to a seminary. From that time, everything in uniform pleased him, all ecclesiastical pomp delighted him; when he was a choir-boy and whilst attending and serving at the altar, he sketched the beadle, the chanter, the officiating priest, in a mass book with a pencil which he hid in the palm of his hand. His first idea was not to leave the seminary, but to become both priest and painter; his mother, deeming the studies he would be obliged to pursue as an artist not very compatible with the duties of a priest, took him away from the seminary. The child then asked to go into a studio. His mother was alarmed at this desire: so many things are learnt in a studio that painting is sometimes the last thing one learns there; nevertheless, her maternal pride urged her to agree; with his inclinations, the boy could not fail to become a

great artist. But where place him, until he grew up ?—Good ! the very thing !—with a chemist ; it would be a middle course ; he would learn there the constituents of colours. Soon he had a laboratory and a mechanical workshop at his mother's house. In the laboratory he studied chemistry : in the workshop he made machines, especially hydraulic machines ; he had the tastes of Agrippa, son-in-law of Augustus. One night his mother heard a slight, but queer, noise in his room : something between a whisper, a wail and a murmur. She rose and stepped forward, and, when she had reached the middle of her room, she felt herself being damped by a fine rain ; she started back, lit a candle and, having felt the effect, discovered the cause. The child had made experiments concerning the physical truth that water tends to find its own level ; he had set a basin in the centre over his mother's room and a reservoir in his own. The reservoir was six feet above the basin ; a tin pipe, perfectly soldered together and ended by a water-spout, served as communication between the reservoir and the basin. During the night the valve had got out of order and the stream of water was working its way through into Madame Boulanger's bedroom !

In other matters, there was no playgoing and no money was allowed : money offers temptation, the theatre prompts the budding of desire. Every Sunday, vespers and mass ! This was the ordinary life of the boy who, just as he sketched all alone and did his mechanical work by himself, so did he begin painting by himself.

At fourteen he was attacked by smallpox, and, after being dangerously ill, remained shut up in his room for a month during his convalescence. For diversion he painted his courtyard with the porter sweeping. The picture still exists and it is charming ; quite like a little Van Ostade. A little later, whilst playing, he rediscovered the secret of painting on glass. After his mother had hesitated between all the celebrated painters in Paris, she decided

on M. Ingres ; the morality of all the others seemed to her to be insufficient or dubious.

At nineteen, he saw his cousin, Marie Elisabeth Monchablon, and immediately fell in love with her. She was fifteen years old. The very day he saw her he begged his mother to let him marry her. His mother was willing enough, but she thought the two children only old enough to be betrothed and not husband and wife. She imposed two years of noviciate on Clément. Marie Monchablon painted, also. You will recollect Madame Clément Boulanger's exquisite water-colour paintings? You remember Madame Cavé's fine work concerning painting without the aid of a master ? Madame Clément Boulanger and Madame Cavé are one and the same charming woman, and the same ethereal artist as Marie Monchablon. The children painted together. Marie began by being Clément's master; Clément ended by being Marie's. Meanwhile, great progress was made at Ingres', and great friendship sprang up between Ingres and his pupil, who was now twenty-one and free, at last, to marry his cousin. The day after their marriage, the young couple ran away to Holland. They were in haste to be free and, above all, to convince themselves of their freedom. For three months nobody knew what had become of them. They re-appeared at the end of that time. The turtle-doves returned of their own accord to their dovecot. During this escapade, Clément had become possessed of the rage for work. The very day of his return he sketched a *Suzanne au bain*, which he finished in three weeks. It is pale and, perhaps, rather monotonous in colouring, but picturesque in composition. Clément admired two very opposite artists : Ingres and Delacroix. He showed his picture to the two masters. Strange to say, they both praised the painter. The colour pleased M. Ingres ; but he blamed the disordered composition. This was what Delacroix liked, but he blamed the colouring. In short, each said to the young man, " You will be a painter ! " Clément

did not let the grass grow after this twofold promise; he sent for a fourteen feet canvas and drew upon it the life-size figures of the *Martyre des Macchabées*. This time, he did not trouble himself much as to what M. Ingres would say; it was Delacroix he wished to please most of all; for, whilst admiring the two painters in, perhaps, an equal degree, his sympathies inclined towards Delacroix. The picture was to glow with colour. Seven months sufficed for its execution. As in the case of *Suzanne*, when the picture was done he called in the two masters. Delacroix was the first to come this time. He was enchanted; and had no critical remarks to make to the young man, whom he overwhelmed with congratulations. Next day, M. Ingres arrived in his turn, uttered a kind of growl, recoiled as though a reflection in a mirror had struck his eyes; gradually his growls change to reproaches: it was ingratitude, heresy, apostasy! M. Ingres went out furious, cursing the renegade. Crushed by this malediction Clément prepared to set out for Rome. This had been the ambition of the two young people for a long time; but their grandparents would never consent to let these young folk of twenty-one and seventeen, thirty-eight years of age all told, travel; and without the leave of their grandparents, who held the purse-strings, how could they travel? There is a Providence who looks after travellers! A connoisseur visited Clément's studio. As in the case of Delacroix, the picturesque setting of *Suzanne* pleased him; he wanted to put *Suzanne* in his bedroom alcove. But Clément, who did not dare to ask 6000 francs for the picture, declared that he did not wish to sell it by itself and asked 4500 francs for the *Macchabées* and 1500 francs for the *Suzanne*. The connoisseur wished only to buy the *Suzanne*, but Clément pointed out to him that the pictures were inseparable. The connoisseur did not understand the reason for this indissoluble bond between the *Suzanne* and the *Macchabées*, and he offered 2000 francs, then 2500, for the *Suzanne* alone. Clément

was inflexible; the only reduction he made was to offer the two pictures for 5000 francs. The connoisseur bought the *Macchabées* in order to get the *Suzanne*, and he put the latter in his bedroom and the former in his garret; and behold the two young people found themselves in control of the vast sum of 5000 francs! They could go round the world five times with that! So they ran off to Italy as they had run away to Holland, taking a travelling carriage to Lyons, crossing Mont Cenis and reaching Rome in twenty-one days. In visiting Italy, Clément, with that devouring imagination of his, wanted to see everything. His wife only desired to see three things: Madame Lætitia, whom they then called Madame Mère, Vesuvius in eruption and Venice at Carnival time. The two latter desires arose from simple curiosity; the first from sentiment: Marie Monchablon was a cousin of General Leclerc, first husband of the Princess Borghese. There was, therefore, relationship with the Napoleon family, although obviously very distant; but relationships go much further back than that in Corsica!

Horace Vernet was director of the school of painting in Rome. The first visit of the two artists was naturally to Horace Vernet; but, on leaving his house, there was only the Monte Pincio to cross, the gate del Popolo to pass and they were in the villa Borghese. Now, at the villa Borghese lived Madame Mère, whom Madame Clément Boulanger was very anxious to see. Chance aided the young enthusiast: during Madame Mère's walk she passed by her. Madame Clément longed to fling herself on her knees;—I can understand this, for it is just what I did, and I am not a fanatic, when I had the honour of being received by Madame Lætitia at Rome, and when she gave me her hand to kiss. Oh! it is impossible to imagine what antique proportions exile seemed to give to that woman! I seemed to see the mother of Alexander, of Cæsar or of Charlemagne. Madame Lætitia looked at the two young people and smiled upon them

as age smiles on youth, as the setting sun smiles on the East, as benevolence smiles on beauty. Madame Clément returned to her lodgings intoxicated with joy. She was invited to the palace Ruspoli that night by Madame Lacroix; still full of delight and not conscious that she was speaking to the secretary of Madame Mère—

"Ah!" she said, "I can leave Rome to-night."

"Why? You only arrived this morning!"

"I have seen what I came to see."

"Ah! What did you want to see?"

"Madame Mère."

She then related the three desires which brought her to Italy: to see Madame Mère, an eruption of Vesuvius and the Carnival at Venice.

The secretary listened to this great enthusiasm without making any comment; but that same evening he related what he had heard to the mother of Cæsar. She smiled, called to mind the two good-looking young people she had bowed to in the garden of the villa Borghese and asked that they should be presented to her on the following day. Next day they were both introduced to Madame Mère's bedchamber, in which the famous old lady usually dwelt.

"Come here, my child," said Madame Lætitia, beckoning to the young wife to come near, "and tell me why you were so anxious to see me."

"Because people say that sons resemble their mother."

Madame Lætitia smiled at that delicious flattery, more than ever charming from the lips of seventeen.

"Then," she replied, "I hope you will have a son of your own, madame!"

"An unfortunate wish, Princess, for I should prefer a daughter."

"Why so?"

"Why should you wish me to bring forth a boy, since the Emperor is no longer here to give him his epaulettes?"

"All the same, have a son and there may, perhaps, be a Napoleon on the throne when he is of age for service."

This strange prophecy was realised! Madame Clément Boulanger has had a son; that son is now twenty-two, and he is employed under a Napoleon in the Government offices.

Some days later, invited to the soirées of Queen Hortense, Madame Clément Boulanger valsed for the first time,—as a young girl, she had never been allowed; as a young wife, she had not yet had time to do so;—she valsed, we say, for the first time, and with Prince Louis. After this they began seriously to set to work. Madame Clément Boulanger had seen all she desired in seeing Madame Mère. but she would have been very disappointed had she been prevented from seeing the rest!

Meanwhile, Clément had finished a companion picture to the *Macchabées* and had sketched out the tournament of the Tournelles: the subject was *Henri II., tué, à travers sa visière, par l'Éclat de lance de Gabriel de Montgomery.* This picture appeared at the Exhibition of 1831, and is now at the château de Saint-Germain.

From Rome the lovers started for Naples. Madame Clément was *enceinte*, and in order to produce a happy pregnancy Providence arranged the eruption of 1832. From Naples they returned to Florence. There Clément completed and exhibited in a church his picture of the *Corpus Domini*. This picture was a great success, so great, that the Contadini from the environs of Florence, who came to see the picture in processions, hearing it constantly said that it was a representation of the *Corpus Domini* and, not knowing what *Corpus Domini* meant, believing that it was the painter's name, openly called Clément Boulanger and his wife M. and Mme. Corpus Domini. Meanwhile, the young couple took hasty excursions into the country and, as the parents could not leave little Albert behind, they put him in a basket which a man carried on his head. This was the son of Corpus Domini, and bearing this title, no goat-herd but would give him of her milk.

In his spare moments Clément remembered his chemical studies: he invented a kind of paper which concealed ink. You only had to dip the pen in the water-jug, stream or river, or simply in your mouth, to write with water or with saliva, and the writing became black as fast as the nib of the pen formed the letters. It was such a wonderful invention that they decided to start a paper factory under illustrious patronage. This patronage was granted and a sheet of the chemical paper was taken to Madame Clément. Unluckily or luckily, Madame Clément had a cold; she sneezed; the damped paper became black all over where it had been wetted. This gave the spectators much food for reflection. It would be impossible to use the paper on a rainy day or days when one had a cold or on days when one was tearful. The factory idea was renounced.

Clément Boulanger returned to Paris in the month of February 1832; and from the 10th to the 15th March of the same year, so far as I can recollect, he covered with his broad and easy style of painting a panel twelve feet by ten in my house.

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In 1840 Clément Boulanger set out for Constantinople. For a year and a half he had been at Toulouse, where he painted the *Procession*, which is now at Saint Étienne-du-Mont. This work in the provinces had wearied him: he wanted the open air, change of scene, the stir of life, in short, instead of a sedentary life, he accepted the suggestion made him by the traveller Tessier, who was going to make excavations in Asia-Minor; and, commissioned by the department of Fine Arts to paint a picture of excavations, Clément, as we have said, set out in 1840. They reached Magnesia near the Mendere river and began to dig in the ground. This preliminary work appeared to Clément to be the most exciting, animated part of the business; he felt that it, at any rate, ought to be reproduced. He made a sketch in the full heat of the midday sun

and, during his work, got one of those attacks of sunstroke that are so dangerous in the East. Brain fever ensued: he was far from all aid; there were only bad Greek doctors near him, of the type that killed Byron. They hung a hammock inside a mosque and laid the poor invalid in it. Delirium set in by the third day; on the fifth, he died laughing and singing, unconscious that he was dying. All the Greek clergy in Constantinople came to pay respect to the body of the poor traveller, who had died at twenty-eight years of age, far away from his friends, his family and his country! Twenty-eight years of age! do you realise? Compare that age with what he had done! The body was carried away on the back of a camel.

There, as here, everybody loved him. People of all lands and in every kind of costume followed the procession. All the French ships in the roadstead carried their flags at half-mast and their ensigns of mourning. The whole staff of the embassy came out to meet the body at the gate of Constantinople, and a procession of over three thousand persons followed it to the French church. There he lies, sleeping, like Ophelia, still smiling and singing!

CHAPTER IV

Grandville

A DELICATE and sarcastic smile, eyes sparkling with intelligence, a satirical mouth, short figure and large heart and a delightful tincture of melancholy perceptible everywhere—that is your portrait, dear Grandville! Come! I begin to have as many friends below ground as above; come to me! tell me that friendship is stronger than the grave and I shall not fear to go down to your abode, since, dying, one rejoins one's dead friends without leaving the living ones.

You will remember, dear Grandville, when I went to call upon you in your garret in the rue des Petits-Augustins, a garret from whence I never came out without carrying away with me some wonderful sketches? What good long talks we had! What fine perceptions! I did not think of asking you then where you came from, neither where you were going; you smiled sadly at life, at the future; you had had some sadness forced out from the depths of your heart. It was easily explained, you were a connecting-link between Molière and la Fontaine. That which I did not think to ask of the artist when he was full of life, energy and health, I now ask of him when he is dead and laid in the grave. You have forgotten, you say, dear Grandville? I understand that. But there is one of your friends, a man of heart and of talent who has not forgotten: take Charles Blanc, and add to what he has forgotten that which you yourself can remember. Your life was too uninteresting, you say? Very well, but

the public takes as much interest in the humble vicar of Wakefield in his village parish as in the brilliant Ralegh at the court of the proud Elizabeth—You will try to remember ? Good !—I will put it down.

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Grandville was born at Nancy. He was the successor, compatriot, one might almost say the pupil, of Callot. His real name was Gérard ; but his father, a distinguished miniature painter, had renounced his family name to take the theatrical name of his grandfather, an excellent comedian who had more than once brought smiles to the lips of the two exiles, Hanislas and Marie Leczinski, one of whom had been a king and the other of whom was to become a queen. The grandfather was called Grandville. This child, who was to create a world of his own, half animal, half human, who was to explain the scent of flowers by making the flower the mere external covering of woman, who, by means of imagery drawn from human life, was to endow the stars with those beauteous eyes which flash amidst the darkness and with which they are supposed to gaze upon the earth, this child, I say, was born on 13 September 1802. He was born so weak that it was thought for a moment he was only born to die, but his mother took him in her arms and hid him so completely in her heart, that Death, who was looking for him, passed by and saw him not. But the child saw Death, and that is why he has since then painted him so accurately.

As a youth, he was taciturn but observant, watching everything with those large melancholy eyes of his, which seemed as though they were looking for and finding in everything some side unknown and invisible to other eyes. It is this side which he has shown in all beings and created things, from the giant to the ant, from man to mollusc, from the star down to the flower. Others find fault with the world as the good God has made it, but, powerless to refashion it, they rest satisfied with

railing at it; Grandville not only did not scoff at it, but even re-created one of his own.

At twelve he entered the school at Nancy, and he left at fourteen. What did Latin, Greek or even French matter to him? He had a language of his own, which he talked in low tones to that invisible master whom we call genius, a language which, later, he was to speak aloud to the whole of creation. When I went to see Grandville and found him holding a lizard in his hand, whistling to a canary in its cage or crumbling bread in a bowl of red fishes, I was always tempted to ask him: "Come, what does the fish, canary or lizard say to you?"

Grandville began to draw at fourteen; I am mistaken, he had always drawn. Exercises and translations were scanty in his college exercise-books, but illustrations—as they have since been termed—to the subject of la rose, rosa and to the translation of *Deus creavit cœlum et terram* were marvellous! So, one day, the masters showed these exercise-books to his father. They meant them to be the means of getting the child a scolding; but the father saw more than the masters did: they only saw an indifferent Latin scholar; the father saw a great artist. All saw correctly, but each turned his back and looked in an opposite direction from that of the others. Grandville was from that day introduced into his father's studio, and had the right to make sketches without being obliged to do exercises and translations. When a sitter came to sit for a miniature in M. Grandville's studio, he sat both to father and son. The sitter, however, only saw the work of the father because that was a finished, varnished and touched-up portrait, whilst the son's was a beautiful and excellent caricature, at which the father would laugh heartily when the sitter was gone, but which he advised his son to hide deep among his drawings, wondering each time how it was that the man's face had some likeness to the head of an animal. Meantime, an artist called Mansion passed through Nancy, and went to call on his

confrère Grandville, who showed him his miniatures; the artist visitor looked at them rather contemptuously, but, when he came to the youth's drawings, he fastened on them eagerly and looked at them as though he would never stop looking, repeating: "More!" as long as there were any more left.

"Let me have this lad," he said to the father, "and I will take him to Paris."

It was hard to give up his boy, even to a brother artist; and yet Grandville's father knew very well that one cannot become a great artist unless one goes out into the great centres of civilisation. He adopted a middle course, which appeased his conscience and comforted his heart. He *promised* to send the boy to Paris. Six months went by before this promise was put into execution; at last, recognising that the lad was wasting time in the provinces, the father made up his mind. A hundred crowns were put into one of the young artist's pockets, a letter to a cousin in the other, and he was commended to the care of the conductor of a diligence; thus the great man of the coming future started for Paris. The cousin's name was Lemétayer; he was manager of the Opéra-Comique. He was a clever man, whom we all knew, very popular in the artist world, and intimate with Picot, Horace Vernet, Léon Cogniet, Hippolyte Lecomte and Féréol.

I shall be asked why I put Féréol, a singer, with Picot, Horace Vernet, Léon Cogniet and Hippolyte Lecomte, four painters? Well, just as M. Ingres, who is a great painter, lays claim to be a virtuoso, so it was with Féréol, who, though an excellent opera-singer, laid claim to be a painter.

Alas! We know others, too, besides M. Ingres and Féréol, who are ambitious in the same way! Now, it happened one day that Féréol, having carried one of his compositions to Lemétayer, it was seen by Grandville, and Grandville, in his disrespect for Féréol's painting, began to draw it over again, as Féréol might have begun singing

over again one of the airs of M. Ingres. Meanwhile, Hippolyte Lecomte came in. We do not know whether Hippolyte Lecomte has, like M. Ingres and Féréol, some hobby besides his art; but we know he was a man possessed of good common sense and of good judgment. It was exactly what the young man wanted, and he passed from M. Mansion's studio to that of Lecomte. And, M. Mansion's pupil kept an old grudge against his master. This was what occasioned it—

With his delightful imagination, which was as picturesque when he was a child as when a man, Grandville had invented a game with fifty-two cards. Mansion thought this game so remarkable that he fathered it under his own name with the title of *La Sibylle des salons*. I once saw the game at Grandville's, when he was in a good humour and turning over all his drawings; there was something very fantastic about it. When with Hippolyte Lecomte, there was no longer any question of drawing—he had to paint. But painting was not Grandville's strong point—pencil or pen were his to any extent! He painted, like Callot, with a steel pen. Pencil, pen and style spoke admirably the language of the artist and adequately expressed what he wanted to say!

Then, suddenly, lithography comes on the scenes. Grandville is attracted to, looks at and examines the process, utters a cry of delight, and feels that this is what he must do. Grandville, like Clément Boulanger, was a seeker, never satisfied with what others found for him to do, at times discontented with what he had found for himself. Callot had substituted in his engravings the spirit varnish of musical instrument-makers for soft varnishes. Grandville executes his lithographs after the manner of engravings: he cuts into the stone with a hard pencil, shades with cut lines, specifies his outlines and draws no more, but engraves; it was at this time that the series of drawings representing the *Tribulations de la petite propriété* appear and that of the *Dimanches d'un bon bourgeois*.

Grandville then lived at the hotel Saint-Phar in the boulevard Poissonnière, the room since occupied by Alphonse Karr, an artist who also used his pen as an engraving tool instead of writing with it.

About 1826 Grandville left the hotel Saint-Phar and went to live in a sort of garret situated opposite the Palais des Beaux-Arts, where I made his acquaintance. Alas! I also lived in another sort of garret; the twenty-five francs which, upon Oudard's *entreaty*, M. de Broval had just added to my salary, did not allow me to live in a first floor of the rue de Rivoli; my garret, however, was envious of Grandville's: an artist's studio, no matter how poor he is, always contains more things than the room of an ordinary workman; a sketch, a statuette, a plaster-cast, an old vizorless helmet, some odd bits of armour with traces of the gold damascening, a stuffed squirrel playing the flute, a gull hanging from the ceiling with wings spread, looking as though it still skimmed the waves, and a strip of Chinese material, draped before a door, give to the walls a coquettish air which rejoices the eye and tickles the fancy. And the painter's studio was a gathering-place for talks. There, and in the adjacent studios, were to be found Philippon, who was to found *La Caricature* and, later, his brother, who founded *Le Journal pour rire*; Ricourt, the persistent maker of improbable stories; Horeau, the architect; Huet, Forest, Renou. When they were flush of money they drank beer; on other days they were content to smoke, shout, declaim and laugh. Grandville laughed, declaimed, shouted, smoked, and drank but little. He remained seated at a table, a sheet of paper before him, pen or pencil in hand, smiling betimes, but everlastingly drawing. What did he draw? He himself never knew. A fancy bordering on the nonsensical guided his pencil. Birds with monkeys' heads, monkeys with fishes' heads, the faces of bipeds on the bodies of quadrupeds: a more grotesque world than Callot's temptations or Breughel's sportive demons.

When two hours had gone by, full of laughter, noise and smoke for the others, Grandville had drawn from his brain, as from some fanciful circle, a whole new creation, which certainly belonged as much to him as that which was destroyed by the Flood belonged to God. It was all very exquisite, very clever, very enchanting; and expressed very clearly what it wished to interpret; the eyes and gestures speaking such a droll language that, by the time one had to leave them, one had always spent upwards of half an hour or an hour looking at them, trying to discover the meaning of them—improvised illustrations of stories unknown by Hoffmann. It was in this way he prepared, composed and published *Les Quatre saisons de la vie*, *Le Voyage pour l'éternité*, *Les Metamorphoses du jour*, and, finally, *La Caricature*, in which all the political celebrities of the day sat for him or before him. Then came 1832.

Grandville had offered that my portrait should be one of the first; he was one of the first to come and mount his platform, smoothing out his panel on a folding ladder and sketching the parts that reached above the height of the door. Two months afterwards, I went on a voyage. Did I see him again? I have my doubts. Only news of his tremendous works reached me. These were *Chansons de Béranger*, *Gargantua au berceau*, the *Fables de la Fontaine*, *Les Animaux peinte par eux-mêmes*, *les Étoiles*, *les Fleurs animées*. Then, in the midst of all these merry figures which fell from his pencil and pen came heartrending and bitter sorrows; his wife and three children died one after the other; when the last died, he himself fell ill. It was as though the voices of his four beloved ones were calling him to them. His conversation changed in character; it became more elevated; no more studio laughter or youthful joking was to be heard. He talked of that future life towards which he was going, of that immortality of the soul of which he was to know the

secret; he soared into purest ether and floated on the most transparent clouds.

On 14 March 1847, he became insane; and he died three days later in the house of Dr. Voisin, at Vauvres. He is buried at Saint-Mandé, near his wife and three children, and if the dead are still endowed with sympathy, he has but to stretch out his arm to touch the hand of Carrel!

CHAPTER V

Tony Johannot

GRANDVILLE disappeared. Did he mount up to heaven on the rays of one of those stars with the faces of women, to whom he made love? Did he lie down to sleep in the tomb, to listen, during the sleep of death, to the growing of those women to whom he had given the stems of flowers? Oh! that is the great secret which the grave guards mysteriously, which death cannot tell life, which Hamlet asked fruitlessly of Yorick, of his father's ghost, of the interrupted song of Ophelia!

This secret my two dear and excellent friends who died on the same day—4 August 1852—Tony Johannot and Alfred d'Orsay, would assuredly have told me if it had been permitted to them. What poetry of sorrow could, then, be adequate to express the feelings of my heart the morning I woke to receive two such letters as these?

"MY DEAR FATHER,—Did you ever hear anything equal to this? I went to Tony Johannot's house yesterday with your letter, to ask him if he could undertake the vignettes for *Isaac Laquedem*, and they said to me: 'Sir, he has just died!'

"Tony Johannot dead! I met him the day before yesterday and we made an appointment for to-day. Dead! This single syllable felt like the tolling of a bell. It awoke the same kind of vibration in my heart. Dead! Tony Johannot is dead! If people die like this, one ought never to leave those one loves. Come back at once to Paris or I shall start for Brussels.—Yours,

"ALEX. DUMAS, *fils*"

"My dear Dumas,—Our well-beloved Alfred d'Orsay died this morning at four o'clock, in my arms laughing, talking, making plans and without any idea he was dying. One of the last names he uttered was yours, for one of his last projects was to renew the lease of your shooting, which he much enjoyed last year. The funeral will take place the day after to-morrow at Chambourcy. Come, if my letter reaches you in time! It would be a comfort to Agénor and to the Duchesse de Grammont to have you with them at such a time.—Yours affectionately,

"Cabarrus"

Another time I will tell you the whole of d'Orsay's history, d'Orsay the gentleman, the man of fashion, the artist, and, above all, the man of kindly heart; and I shall certainly not have room in one chapter to do that. For the present, let us restrict ourselves to Tony Johannot, the one among the four dead men whose lives I am relating with whom I was the most intimate.

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He was born in 1803, in the little town of Offenbach, as was his brother; I have given the history of his parents and of his early days in relating that of Alfred. He must, therefore, appear before our readers as a young man in the same frame as Alfred; it was in this way, indeed, that the *Artiste* published them in its two excellent portraits of those twin-geniuses of art. Tony was delightful in those days, when about thirty years old: a clear, fresh complexion which a woman might have envied, short, curly hair, a dark moustache, small, but bright, intelligent and sparkling eyes, medium height in figure but wonderfully well-proportioned. Like Alfred, he was silent; but he was not as taciturn: his melancholy never went so far as depression: he was a man of few words and never launched out into a long sentence, but what he said always showed delicacy of perception and flashes of wit. Finally, his talent reflected his character like a mirror, and any one not knowing him could have formed a perfectly correct idea

of him from his drawings, vignettes and pictures. The first time I saw him, if I remember rightly, was at the house of our dear good friend, Nodier. Nodier was very fond of both of the brothers. Tony brought a lovely water-colour to Marie Nodier. I can see it now: it represented a woman being murdered, either a Desdemona or a Vanina d'Ornano. It was meant for Marie's album. We drew together at once without hesitation, as if our two hearts had been in search of one another for twenty-five years; we were the same age, almost, he a little younger than I. I have related in these Memoirs that we went through the Rambouillet campaign side by side and that we returned from it together. A score of times he had tried to make a portrait sketch of me; a score of times he had erased the paper clean, rubbed off the wood, scratched the paint off the canvas, dissatisfied with his work. It was in vain I told him it was a good likeness.

"No," he said, "and no one could do it, any more than I can."

"Why so?"

"Because your face changes in expression every ten seconds. How can one make a likeness of a man who is not like himself?"

Then, to compensate me he would turn over his portfolios and give me a charming drawing of *Minna et Brenda*, or a lovely sketch of the *Last of the Mohicans*.

The chief merit of the character of Tony Johannot and the particular note of his talent was that gift of heaven bestowed specially on flowers, birds and women—charm. Tony even delighted his critics. His colour was, perhaps, a trifle monotonous, but it was cheerful, light and silvery in tone. His women were all like one another, Virginie and Brenda, Diana Vernon and Ophelia; what did it matter since they were all young and beautiful and gracious and chaste? The daughters of the poets, to whatever country they belong, have all one and the same father—genius. Charlotte and Desdemona,

Leonora and Haidée, doña Sol and Amy Robsart are sisters. Now who can reproach sisters for bearing a family likeness ?

Other illustrators found fault with Tony for monopolising every book as they blamed me for monopolising every newspaper. Ah ! well, Tony has been dead eighteen months ; let us see where, then, are those vignettes which were only waiting for a chance to be produced ? Where, then, are all the illustrated *Pauls and Virginies*, the *Manon Lescauts*, *Molières*, *Coopers*, *Walter Scotts* which were to cause those of the poor dead artist to be forgotten ? Where, then, are the fancies and whims which are to succeed this rage ? Where is the art which is to replace this trade ? So far as I am concerned, since they have brought the same reproach of monopolising against me, and an occasion offers to say a word on this subject, I will say it without circumlocution. At the present moment, 15 December 1853, I have for some time past more or less left *La Presse* free, *Le Siècle* free, *Le Constitutionnel* free ; I have only one more story to write for *Le Pays* : see, you victimised gentlemen, the gates stand open, the columns are empty ; besides *Le Constitutionnel*, *Le Siècle*, *La Presse*, you have *La Patrie*, *L'Assemblée nationale*, *Le Moniteur*, the *Revue de Paris*, the *Revue des Deux Mondes* ; write your *Reine Margots*, gentlemen ! Write *Monte-Cristo*, the *Mousquetaires*, *Capitaine Paul*, *Amaury*, *Comtesse de Charny*, *Conscience*, *Pasteur d'Ashbourn* ;—write all these, gentlemen ! do not wait till I am dead. I have but one regret : it is that I cannot divert myself from my gigantic work by reading my own books ; distract my thoughts by letting me read yours, and I assure you it will be a good thing for both me and yourselves and, perhaps, even better for you than for me.

Tony did as I did ; he first of all worked at the rate of six hours a day, then eight, then ten, then twelve, then fifteen : work is like the intoxication of hashish and of

opium : it creates a fictitious life inside real life, so full of delicious dreams and adorable hallucinations that one ends by preferring the fictitious life to the real one. Tony then worked fifteen hours a day—which speaks for itself.

Thus, after he had exhibited with his brother, the series of *tableaus-vignettes* to which I have referred in connection with Alfred, he did the following by himself : *Minna et Brenda sur le bord de la mer, La Bataille de Rosbecque, La Mort de Julien d'Avenel, La Bataille de Fontenoy, l'Enfance de Duguesclin, L'Embarquement d'Élisabeth à Kenilworth, Deux Jeunes Femmes près d'une fenêtre, La Sieste, Louis XIII. forcant le passage du Méandre,* a subject taken from George Sand's *André,* a subject from the Gospels, one from the *Imitation of Christ, Le Roi Louis-Philippe offrant à la reine Victoria deux tapisseries des Gobelins au Château d'Eu.* Then, after failing to exhibit in the Exhibitions of 1843, 1845 and 1846, he sent twelve pictures in 1848, five in 1850, three in 1851 and, in 1852, a *Scène de village* and the *Plaisirs de l'automne.* Three or four years previously, Tony's friends had been alarmed by a thing which, in spite of the fear of the doctors, seemed nevertheless quite impossible. He had been threatened with pulmonary phthisis. Nothing could have been more solidly constructed, it must be said, than Tony Johannot's chest, and, allowing for immoderate ambition, never were lungs more commodiously situated for fulfilling their functions ; so Tony's friends did not feel anxious. He coughed, spat a little blood, took a course of treatment and got better. He had not stopped working. Work is a factor of health in the case of all who are producers. He had just done his *Évangile* and *Imitation of Christ,* he had stopped work on an oil-painting of *Ruth and Boaz* to start upon illustrations to the works of Victor Hugo, when, suddenly, he sank down and fell on his knees. He was struck by a crushing attack of apoplexy. On 4 August 1852, he died. The twofold news came too late : I could neither follow d'Orsay to

the cemetery of Chambourcy, nor follow Tony Johannot to the cemetery of Montmartre. There it is that the creator of many charming vignettes, many fascinating pictures, sleeps in the vault where his two brothers Charles and Alfred had preceded him.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

Sequel to the preparations for my ball—Oil and distemper—Inconveniences of working at night—How Delacroix did his task—The ball—Serious men—La Fayette and Beauchene—Variety of costumes— The invalid and the undertaker's man—The last galop—A political play—A moral play

LET us return from painters to paintings. The eleventh decorator had signed himself Ziégler. We did not reckon on him, but he had foreseen what might happen; one panel had been left blank and this was given to him on which to make a scene from *La Esmeralda*. Three days before the ball, everybody was at his post: Alfred Johannot was sketching his scene from *Cinq-Mars*; Tony Johannot, his *Sire de Giac*; Clément Boulanger, his *Tour de Nesle*; Louis Boulanger his *Lucrèce Borgia*; Jadin and Decamps worked in collaboration at their *Debureau*, Grandville at his *Orchestre*, Barye at his *Tigres*, Nanteuil at his door-panels, which were two medallions representing Hugo and Alfred de Vigny. Delacroix alone failed to answer to the appeal: they wanted to dispose of his panel, but I answered for him.

It was very diverting to see the start for this steeplechase between ten painters of equal merit. Each of them, without, apparently, watching his neighbour, followed with his eyes first the charcoal then the paint-

brush. None of them — the Johannots in particular, being engravers and designers of vignettes and painters of easel pictures—were accustomed to the use of distemper. But the painters of large canvases soon got into the way of it. Among these, Louis and Clément Boulanger seemed as though they had never worked in any other medium. Jadin and Decamps discovered wonderful tones in this new method of execution, and declared they never wanted to paint in anything again but distemper. Ziégler took to it with some ease, Barye made belief that it was water-colour on a grand scale, but easier and more quickly done than water-colour on the small scale. Grandville drew with red chalk, charcoal and Spanish white chalk, and produced prodigious effects with these three crayons. We waited with curiosity for Delacroix, whose facility of execution has become proverbial. As I have said, only the two Johannots were behindhand. They knew they would not be finished if they did not work at night. Consequently, whilst others played, smoked and gossiped, both continued their day's work when night came, rejoicing in the tones given them by the light, and the superiority of lamplight to that of day, for painting intended to be seen by lamplight. They did not stop working till midnight, but they caught up with the others by so doing. Next day, when light broke, Alfred and Tony uttered cries of despair : by lamplight they had mistaken yellow for white and white for yellow, green for blue and blue for green. The two pictures looked like huge *omelettes aux fines herbes*. At this juncture Ciceri *père* came in. He had but to glance at the two pictures to guess what had happened.

" Bravo ! " he said ; " we have a green sky and yellow clouds ! But that is a mere nothing ! "

Indeed, it was more specially in the sky that the error had been committed. He took up the brushes and with broad, vigorous, powerful strokes he repainted the skies of both pictures in one minute : the one calm, serene and azure,

leaving a glimpse of the splendours of Dante's paradise through the blue of the firmament ; the other low, cloudy, charged with electricity, ready to burst forth into lightning flashes.

All the young painters learnt in an instant the secrets of decoration, which they had been hours groping after on the previous day. Nobody cared about working at night. Besides, thanks to the lesson given by Ciceri *père*, things were progressing with giant strides. There was no more news of Delacroix than if he had never existed. On the night of the second day I sent to him to ask if he remembered that the ball was fixed for the next day. He sent reply that I need not be anxious and he would come at breakfast-time next morning. Work began with the dawn next day. Most of the workers, moreover, had their task three-quarters finished. Clément Boulanger and Barye had done. Louis Boulanger had no more than three or four hours' work. Decamps was putting the last touches to his *Debureau*, and Jadin to his poppies and corn-flowers ; Grandville was at work on his door tops, when, as he had promised, Delacroix arrived.

" Well, now, how are you getting on ? " he asked.

" You see for yourself," said each worker, standing aside to let his work be seen.

" Oh, really ! but you are doing miniature-work here ! You should have told me : I would have come a month ago."

He went round all the four rooms, stopping before each panel and finding something pleasant to say to each of his confrères, thanks to the charming spirit with which he is endowed. Then, as they were going to breakfast, he breakfasted too.

" Well ? " he asked, when breakfast was done, turning towards the empty panel.

" Well, there it is ! " I said. " It is the panel for the *Crossing of the Red Sea* ; the sea has gone back, the Israelites have crossed, the Egyptians have not yet arrived."

"Then I will take advantage of the fact to do something else. What would you like me to stick up there?"

"Oh, you know, a King Rodrigo after a battle:

> "'Sur les rives murmurantes
> Du fleuve aux ondes sanglantes,
> Le roi sans royaume allait,
> Froissant, dans ses mains saignantes,
> Les grains d'or d'un chapelet.'"

"Ah, is that what you want?"

"Yes."

"You will not ask me for something else when it is half done?"

"Of course not!"

"Here goes, then, for King Rodrigo!"

And, without taking off his little black coat which clung closely to his body, without turning up his sleeves or taking off his cuffs, or putting on a blouse or cotton jacket, Delacroix began by taking his charcoal and, in three or four strokes, he had drawn the horse; in five or six, the cavalier; in seven or eight, the battlefield, dead, dying and fugitives included; then, making sufficient out of this rough sketch to be intelligible to himself, he took up brushes and began to paint. And, in a flash, as if one had unveiled a canvas, one saw appear under his hand, first a cavalier, bleeding, injured and wounded, half dragged by his horse, who was as hurt as himself, holding on by the mere support of his stirrups, and leaning on his long lance; round him, in front and behind him, the dead in heaps; by the riverside, the wounded trying to put their lips to the water, and leaving tracks of blood behind them; as far as the eye could see, away towards the horizon stretched the battlefield, ruthless and terrible; above it all, in a horizon made dense by the vapour of blood, a sun was setting like a red buckler in a forge; then, finally, a blue sky which, as it melted away into the distance, became an indefinable shade of green, with rosy clouds on it like the down of an ibis. The whole

thing was wonderful to see : a circle gathered round the master and each one of the artists left his task to come and clap his hands without jealousy or envy at the new Rubens, who improvised both composition and execution as he went on. It was finished in two or three hours' time. At five that afternoon, owing to a large fire, all was dry and they could place the forms against the walls. The ball had created an enormous stir. I had invited nearly all the artists in Paris ; those I had forgotten wrote to remind me of their existence. Many society women had done the same, but they asked to be allowed to come masked : it was an impertinence towards other women and I left it to the responsibility of those who had offered it. It was a fancy dress ball, but not a masked one ; the order was strict, and I hired two dozen dominoes for the use of impostors, whoever they might be, who attempted to introduce themselves in contraband dress.

At seven o'clock, Chevet arrived with a fifty-pound salmon, and a roebuck roasted whole, served on a silver dish which looked as though it had been borrowed from Gargantua's sideboard, and a gigantic pâté, all to correspond. Three hundred bottles of Bordeaux were put down to warm, three hundred bottles of Burgundy were cooling, five hundred bottles of champagne were on ice.

I had discovered in the library, in a little book of engravings by Titian's brother, a delightful costume of 1525 : hair cut round and hanging over the shoulders, bound in with a gold band ; a sea-green jerkin, braided with gold, laced down the front of the shirt with gold lace, and fastened at the shoulder and elbows by similar lacing ; breeches of parti-coloured red and white silk ; black velvet slippers, à la François I., embroidered in gold. The mistress of the house, a very handsome person, with dark hair and blue eyes, was in a velvet dress, with a starched collarette, and the black felt hat with black feathers of Helena Formann, Rubens's second wife. Two orchestras had been set up in each suite of rooms, in such a

way that, at a given moment, they could both play the same air, and the galop could be heard throughout the five rooms and the hall. At midnight, these five rooms afforded a wonderful spectacle. Everybody had taken up the idea with the exception of those who styled themselves staid men; every one had come in fancy dress; but it was in vain that the serious-minded men pleaded their seriousness; no attention whatever was paid to it; they were compelled to clothe themselves in dominoes of the quietest colours. Véron, a staid person, though he could also be merry, was muffled up in rose colour; Buloz, who was serious and melancholy in temperament, was decked out in sky-blue; Odilon Barrot, who was ultra-serious to solemnness, had obtained a black domino, in virtue of his twofold title of barrister and député; finally, La Fayette, the good, the fashionable and courtly old gentleman, smiling at all this foolishness of youth, had, without offering any opposition to it, put on the Venetian costume. This man had pressed the hand of Washington, had compelled Marat to hide in caves, had struggled against Mirabeau, had lost his popularity in saving the life of the queen, and on 6 October had said to a royalty of ten centuries old: "Bow thyself before that royalty which yesterday was called the people!" This man—who, in 1814, had thrust Napoleon from his throne; who, in 1830, had helped Louis-Philippe to ascend his; who, instead of falling, had gone on growing in power during revolutions—was with us also, simple as greatness, good as strength, candid as genius. He was, in fact, the subject of astonishment and admiration for all those entrancing beings who saw, touched and spoke to him for the first time, who brought back to him his younger days; he looked at them earnestly, gave both his hands to them and responded with the most polite and courteous words to all the pretty speeches the charming queens of the Paris theatres addressed to him. You will recollect having been the favourites of

that famous man for one whole night, you—Léontine Fay, Louise Despréaux, Cornélie Falcon, Virginie Déjazet? You recollect your amazement in finding him simple and gentle, coquettish and gallant, witty and deferential, as he had been forty years before at the balls of Versailles and the Trianon? One moment Beauchene sat down by him, and this juxtaposition made a singular contrast: Beauchene wore the Vendeén costume in all its completeness: the hat surrounded with a handkerchief, the Breton jacket, short trousers, gaiters, the bleeding heart on the breast, and the English carbine. Beauchene, who passed for a too Liberal Royalist under the Bourbons of the Elder Branch, passed for too Royalist a Liberal under the Younger Branch. So, General La Fayette, recognising him, said with a charming smile—

"Monsieur de Beauchene, tell me, I beg you, in virtue of wl[illegible]ge are you the only person here who is not wea[illegible]ise?"

A[illegible] an hour later, both were seated at an écarté table, and Beauchene was playing against the Republican of 1789 and of 1830, with gold bearing the effigy of Henry V.

The sitting-room presented the most picturesque appearance. Mademoiselle Mars, Joanny, Michel Menjaud, Firmin, Mademoiselle Leverd had come in the costumes belonging to *Henri III.* It was the court of the Valois complete. Dupont, the offended soubrette of Molière, the merry soubrette of Marivaux, was in a Boucher shepherdess costume. Georges, who had regained the beauty of her best days, had taken the costume of a Nettuno peasant-girl, and Madame Paradol wore that of Anne of Austria. Rose Dupuis had one like Lady Rochester. Noblet was in harlequin's dress; Javureck was a Turkish slave-girl. Adèle Alphonse, who was making her first public appearance, arriving, I think, from Saint Petersburg, was a young Greek girl. Léontine Fay, an Albanian woman. Falcon, the beautiful Jewess, was

dressed as Rebecca; Déjazet, as du Barry; Nourrit, as a court abbé; Monrose, as a soldier of Ruyter; Volnys, as an Armenian; Bocage, as Didier. Allan—who, no doubt, took himself for a serious-minded person like Buloz and Véron—was clad in a white necktie, black coat and trousers; but, over the toilet of a gilded youth, we had insisted on putting a cabbage-green domino. Rossini had taken the costume of Figaro, and vied in popularity with La Fayette. Moyne, our poor Moyne! who had so much talent and who, in spite of his talent, died of hunger, killing himself in the hope that his death would bequeath a pension to his widow—Moyne had taken the costume of Charles IX.; Barye was dressed as a Bengal tiger; Etex, as an Andalusian; Adam, as a doll; Zimmermann, as a kitchen-maid; Plantade, as Madame Pochet; Pichot, as a magician; Alphonse Royer, as a Turk; Charles Lenormand, as a native of Smyrna; Considérant, as a bey of Algiers; Paul de Musset, as a Russian; Alfred de Musset, as a weather-cock; Capo de Feuillide, as a toreador. Eugène Sue, the sixth of the serious men, was in a pistachio domino; Paul Lacroix, as an astrologer; Pétrus Borel, who took the name of Lycanthrope, as Young France; Bard, my companion in the Soissons expedition, as a page of the time of Albert Dürer; Francisque Michel, as a vagabond; Paul Fouché, as a foot-soldier in the Procession of Fools; Eugène Duverger, as Van Dyck; Ladvocat, as Henri II.; Fournier, as a sailor; Giraud, as a man-at-arms of the eleventh century; Tony Johannot, as Sire de Giac; Alfred Johannot, as young Louis XI.; Menut, as a page of Charles VII.; Louis Boulanger, as a courtier of King John; Nanteuil, as an old soldier of the sixteenth century; Gaindron, as a madman; Boisselot, as a young lord of the time of Louis XII.; Chatillon, as Sentinelli; Ziégler, as Cinq-Mars; Clément Boulanger, as a Neapolitan peasant; Roqueplan, as a Mexican officer; Lépaule, in Highland dress; Grenier, as a seaman; Robert Fleury, as a Chinaman; Delacroix,

as Dante; Champmartin, as a pilgrim; Henriquet Dupont, as Ariosto; Chenavard, as Titian; Frédérick Lemaître, as Robert Macaire covered with spangles.

Several droll incidents enlivened the evening. M. Tissot, of the Academy, conceived the notion of making himself up as an invalid; he had scarcely entered, when Jadin came in as an undertaker's man and, lugubrious crêpe on his hat, followed him from room to room, fitting his pace to his and every five minutes repeating the words: "*I am waiting!*" M. Tissot could not stand it and, in half an hour's time, he left. At one time, there were seven hundred persons present. We had supper at three in the morning. The two rooms of the empty flat on my landing were converted into a dining-room.

Wonderful to relate there was enough for everybody to eat and to drink! At nine o'clock in the morning, with music ringing in their heads, they began a final galop in the rue des Trois-Frères, the head of the procession reaching to the boulevard whilst the tail was still frisking in the courtyard of the square. I have often thought since of giving a second ball like that one, but it always seemed to me that it would be quite impossible.

It was about this time that they performed at the Odéon a play which made some sensation, first on account of its own merit, and, also, from the measure that it suggested. This play had for title: *Révolution d'autrefois, ou les Romains chez eux.* The authors were Félix Pyat and Théo.

They had taken for their hero the mad Emperor, whom, six years later, I tried in my turn to put on to the stage—Caligula. There was scarcely any plot in the play; its principal merit was that which was attached to its subtitle: *Les Romains chez eux.* Indeed, this was the first time people had seen the toga worn, and buskins on the feet, and the speech, actions, and eating as had been the case in real life. The subject was the death of Caligula

and the succession of Claudius to the throne. Unfortunately for the longevity of the play, it contained a scene which seemed to imply a disrespectful allusion to the leader of the Government. It was the third scene of the last act. One soldier represented Claudius as being perfectly suitable for the Romans, because he was *big, fat* and *stupid*. It is impossible to describe the effect which this *big, fat* and *stupid* produced; there was at that period a terrible reaction against Louis-Philippe. The insurrection of the month of June still brooded upon all spirits. They applied these three epithets to the head of the Government, doing him the justice which he was at anyrate to deserve sixteen or seventeen years later. I had not been present at the first performance. I succeeded, after great difficulty, in getting a seat at the second. Take careful note that I am speaking of the Odéon. All Paris would have come to Harel's theatre, for I think he still had the Odéon then, if the play had not been stopped at the third performance. And the most curious thing was that nobody, neither manager nor authors, counted much on the work, which was readily to be seen by the way in which it was mounted. Apart from Lockroy and Provost, the whole play was distributed amongst what is called in theatrical parlance *la troupe de fer-blanc* ("a fit-up crowd"). Arsène played Chéréas and Moëssard, Claude. Seventeen days later the Porte-Saint-Martin played a piece which was to cause a scandal of another order. It was called: *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme, ou les mauvais conseils*. The leading part was played by Dorval. The play of *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme*—the first manuscript at least—was by a young man of thirty or so, named Ferrier. Harel, while reading it, had seen in it a sequel to *Joueur* and had coupled Ferrier with Scribe. The result of this alliance was a play fit to make people's hair stand on end, a drama which Mecier or Rétif de la Bretonne would hardly have put their names to!

Something like eighteen years later, we were discussing, at the Council of State, before the commission formed to prepare the law connected with theatres the question of dramatic censorship and theatrical liberty, and, on this head, I heard Scribe attack *immoral literature* more violently than was usual with him. He demanded a censorship which should be a salutary check to keep talent from the excesses of all kinds to which it was too apt to surrender itself. I allowed myself to interrupt the austere orator, and addressed this question laughingly so that it could be heard all over the room.

"Come, tell us, Scribe, does the drama entitled *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme* come under the head of moral literature?"

"What?"

I repeated the question.

Scribe replied in the same laughing spirit in which he had been attacked. Read the work again and you will see it would have been difficult for him to reply otherwise. You shall judge for yourselves. We have so often seen our works and those of the Romantic school taxed with immorality by people who uphold M. Scribe as a moral author, that it must really be permitted us to repeat the accusation here and to show, *play in hand*, how far they pushed the scandal at times in the opposite camp. The wide point of view which the outline of these Memoirs embraces makes us hope that such an exposition may not be looked upon as a digression. At all events, those of our readers who think it irrelevant are quite at liberty to pass over the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

Dix ans de la vie d'une femme

THIS is what *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme* was like. Adèle Évrard has married M. Darcey, a rich landowner, a worthy and excellent man, full of concern for, attention towards and kindnesses to his wife—a sort of Danville of the *École des vieillards*, with this difference, that Darcey is only forty. Adèle, Madame Darcey, has the same Christian name as Madame d'Hervey ; but, instead of being like the heroine of *Antony*, ready to struggle to the point of preferring death to shame, Adèle of *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme* was born possessed of every evil tendency that could be fostered by bad influences. Now such bad influences were not wanting in her case. Adèle, daughter of an honest merchant, wife of an honest man, had made the acquaintance—(where, the narrative does not say, but it ought to have done : these things, even on the stage, ought to be explained)—Adèle, we repeat, had made the acquaintance of two disreputable women named Madame Laferrier and Sophie Marini. At the raising of the curtain, Adèle is chatting with her sister ; of what ? Of a subject young wives and girls are eternally talking about—Love. Clarisse loves a fascinating young man named Valdeja, who holds a position of attaché to the Embassy at Saint Petersburg, far away from her. There is but one disquieting element in that love—the character of the recipient is inclined to melancholy.

Meanwhile, M. Darcey arrives. At the first words he

pronounces, one can recognise that he is an excellent man, half father, half husband ; his wife, whom he adores, will have the sunny side of life ; only the feathers, silks and velvets of married life if she will but obey his orders, or rather, accede to her husband's wishes, which are very simple and reasonable. He wishes her to cease from seeing two persons who are of more than equivocal antecedents, whose conduct and ways are not consistent with the behaviour of a respectable woman, or with the duties of the mother of a family. Adèle promises in a fashion which means that she will break her promise. Her husband goes out, called away from home on business which will detain him half the day ; Clarisse goes to attend to household matters, and Madame Darcey stays alone. Hardly is she left thus before she is told that Madame Laferrier, Sophie Marini and M. Achille Grosbois have come. Her first impulse is to recall the promise she has made to her husband ; the second, to put it on one side. Enter these ladies and M. Achille.

We can imagine the turn the conversation takes, particularly when, on seeing Adèle's troubled looks as she welcomes her friends, they discover something fresh has happened in the household and that Darcey has forbidden his wife to receive Sophie and Amélie. Such a prohibition, which should make two women who possess merely the faintest feelings of pride fly for very shame, only incites our two hussies : they do not merely content themselves with paying an ordinary call at the château ; they invite themselves to dinner. Furthermore, as though they had expected the affront that had been offered them, they prepare their revenge : M. Rodolphe is to come.

" Qu'est-ce que M. Rodolphe ? demande Adèle.
— Un jeune homme charmant !
— Qu'est-ce qu'il est ?
— Il va à Tortoni.
— J'entends bien . . . Mais qu'est-ce qu'il fait ?

— Il déjeune le matin chez Tortoni, et le soir, vous le trouvez, en gants jaunes, au balcon de tous les théâtres. Du resté, il est garçon, possède vingt-mille livres de rente, et est adorateur d'Adèle.

— De moi ?

— Il te poursuit partout sans pouvoir t' atteindre, et, en désespoir de cause, nous adore, Sophie et moi, parce que nous sommes tes meilleures amies ! "

And, upon this somewhat vague intelligence, that Rodolphe breakfasts at Tortoni's and is at night in the stalls at the theatres wearing yellow gloves, Adèle receives M. Rodolphe and invites him to dinner with her friends and M. Achille Grosbois. At this juncture, Clarisse runs in joyously: she tells her sister that a coupé, drawn by two horses with the most beautiful coats and a coachman in elegant livery, sent as a gift from M. Darcey, are just coming into the château courtyard.

" Comment ! Ju n'avais pas encore de coupé ? dit une des visiteuses.

— Il y a trois ans que mon mari m'en a donné un ! dit l'autre."

And the effect M. Darcey intended to produce by his driver and carriage and pair is completely lost. But, as Adèle's father arrives in this fine equipage, however little enthusiasm Madame Darcey puts into her appreciation of a present she has looked forward to for so long, she is obliged to leave her dear friends, not to see the carriage, coachman and horses, but to welcome M. Évrard. Amélie follows her, for fear, no doubt, that the paternal embraces may awaken some proper feeling in her friend's heart. Sophie, M. Achille, M. Rodolphe and Clarisse remain together. Conversation is difficult between a virtuous young girl and such creatures ; but wait, Sophie means to keep up the conversation. She thanks Clarisse for a little sum the latter has given her. Sophie Marini had undertaken to collect money as a charitable lady, and fulfils, by so doing, a pious duty. For what had this person been collecting ? Oh, that is a perfectly simple

matter: for a young girl who has been deserted by a shameful seducer.

"Oh! voilà qui est horrible! s'écrie Rodolphe, — *étendu sur une chaise.*

— Je ne vous nommerai pas le séducteur, quoique je le connaisse, reprend Sophie; ce serait inutile: il n'est plus en France, il est très-loin, à l'étranger . . . en Russie.

— En Russie! répète Clarisse vivement, — sans s'apercevoir que, devant elle, jeune fille et demi-maîtresse de maison, il y a un monsieur qui reste *étendu sur une chaise.*

— Oui, en Russie, où il occupe une fort belle place! Et, certainement, ce Valdeja aurait bien pu . . .

— Valdeja! s'écrie Clarisse."

Well! the poison is shed, the poor child is wounded to the heart! Adèle re-enters. She thinks she will have a meal prepared in the pavilion in the park. The whole company then go out to luncheon. Some minutes later, M. Darcey returns, and he learns that the best wines from his cellar, and the finest fruits from his garden are being served to entertain M. Achille and M. Rodolphe, whom he does not know at all, and Mesdames Sophie Marini and Amélie Laferrier, whom he knows but too well. He asks himself if it is possible his wife can so soon have forgotten the promise she made him, when Amélie, Sophie and Achille appear on the scenes and proceed to talk freely without perceiving the master of the house.

"AMELIE.

Nous voici revenus au point d'ou nous étions partis . . Il est charmant, ce parc; mais c'est un véritable labyrinthe.

SOPHIE.

Heureusement, nous n'y avons pas rencontré le Minotaure!

ACHILLE.

Il est à Paris.

DARCEY, *qui s'est tenu a l'écart, s'avance près d'Amélie.*

Non, monsieur!

Exclamation génerale.

ACHILLE.

Ma foi! monsieur, qui se serait douté que vous étiez là à

m'éconter ? Rien de plus dès obligeant que d'etre écouté ! Vous excuserez la plaisanterie, j'espère ?

DARCEY.

Monsieur . . .

ACHILLE.

L'air de la campagne pousse singulièrement aux bons mots, et, sans examiner s'ils sont exacts, la langue s'en débarrasse.

DARCEY.

Je comprends cela à merveille ; mais j'ai un grand travers d'esprit : je n'amie pas les fats.

ACHILLE.

Ah ! vous n'aimez pas ! . . .

DARCEY.

Ah ! vous n'aimez pas ! . . .

DARCEY.

Non, je ne les amie pas ; et, quand ils s'introduisent chez moi (regardant les deux dames), dans quelque compagnie qu'ils se trouvent, je les chasse sans balancer.

ACHILLE, *sur les épines.*

Fort-bien, fort-bien !—Je disais tout à l'heure.

DARCEY, *élevant la voix.*

Monsieur, vous m'avez compris . . .

SOPHIE, *à Amélie.*

Il n'y a pas moyen d'y tenir : sortons, ma chère ! Elle sort en donnant la main à Achille.

DARCEY.

Je serais désolé de vous retenir.

AMELIE.

Monsieur, un pareil outrage.

DARCEY.

Madame Laferrier me permettra-t-elle de la reconduire jusqu' à sa voiture ?"

And whilst Darcey turns his back, the following scene takes place between Adèle and Rodolphe.

"RODOLPHE, *un bouquet à la main.*

Eh bien, où sont dont ces dames ?

ADÈLE.

Dieu ! M. Rodolphe, parlez ! éloignez-vous !

RODOLPHE.

Et pourquoi donc ?

ADÈLE.

Mon mari est de retour.

RODOLPHE.

Eh ! que m'importe ?

ADÈLE.

Il vient de nous faire une scène affreuse.

RODOLPHE, *gaiement.*

C'est comme cela que je les amie, les maris !

ADÈLE.

Mais, pour moi, monsieur ; pour moi, de grâce, parlez !

RODOLPHE.

Pour vous, c'est différent, il s'y a rien que je ne fasse. Mais mon respect, ma soumission me priveront ils de votre présence ? Dois-je désormais renoncer à ce bonheur ?

ADÈLE.

Il le faut. *Je ne puis plus vous voir.*

RODOLPHE.

Chez vous, je le comprends ; mais dans le monde. Chez vous, amies ? . . .

ADÈLE, *avec crainte.*

Monsieur, vous me faites mourir !

RODOLPHE.

Un mot de consentement, un seul mot, et je pars ; sinon, je reste.

ADÈLE.

Parlez, parlez, je vous en supplie !

RODOLPHE, *lui baisant la main.*

Ah ! que je vous remercie ! "

He escapes by the bottom of the garden ; then Darcey returns.

"DARCEY.

Leur voiture est sur la route de Paris. . . . Maintenant, madame, voulez-vous que nous passions au salon ?

ADÈLE.

Monsieur, est ce la le commencement du rôle de mari ?

DARCEY.

Oui, madame.

ADÈLE, *sortant.*

Alors, malheur à celui qui ose s'en charger !

DARCEY, *la suivant des yeux, et sortant apres elle.*

Malheur à toi, si tu écoutes d'autres conseils que ceux de la raison ! "

In the second act, Adèle is the mistress of Rodolphe. Thus, the wife has not even the excuse of seduction ; she has not been overcome, given in through weakness, hesitated ; she yielded as Sophie Marini or Amélie Laferrier would ; then the interest grows. A wife is lost, but without any efforts to save herself !

Valdeja has arrived from Russia ; he is gloomier, more bitter, more averse to women than ever. A young girl who loved him, whom he was counting upon marrying, who was almost his betrothed, has written to him through her father that she does not love him, and could not love him. Hence, Valdeja's sadness, his vow to be avenged on other women for the sufferings this one has caused him. Darcey does not know who the young girl is : an extraordinary thing, considering the degree of intimacy between himself and Valdeja, and that that young girl is his sister-in-law. But to proceed ! . . .

Adèle enters. She exercises that insincere tenderness towards her husband, that assiduity which is affected by deceitful women. At the first words, Valdeja is not taken in by it. Adèle tells her husband that she has just learnt that her father is ill ; she therefore proposes to go and see him, but she will return to dinner.

"Vraiment ! Il est neuf heures du matin, dit Darcey, et à six heures tu seras rentrée ?

— A moins qu'on ne me retienne ; ce pauvre père si bon !

— Il me semble qu'en envoyant Créponne ou Baptiste s'informer de sa santé . . .

— Oh ! ce serait d'une indifférence . . . Et puis, Clarisse, *ma jeune sœur*, m'a écrit : elle désire me voir, sans doute au sujet du mariage dont il est question pour elle, tu sais ?

— Ah ! mademoiselle votre sœur va se marier ? "

Here we see Valdeja informed that Clarisse is going to be married, as she has been told that Valdeja had been unfaithful to her. After this, Adèle insists so much on her father's illness, and on the fact that the letter from her sister Clarisse is very urgent, that her husband gives her complete liberty to go where she wished. The eagerness with which she takes advantage of this liberty rouses Valdeja's suspicions, and under pretext of having to make various visits, a letter from a Russian prince to be handed to a M. Laferrier, and so on, he goes out at a venture to follow Madame Darcey, when they announce the arrival of Clarisse.

" Alors, répond Darcey, dites à Adèle que sa sœur est là.

— Madame est sortie.

— C'est étonnant ! Je n'ai pas entendu sa voiture, et il y a trop loin pour qu'elle aille à pied.

— Madame avait envoyé Baptiste à la place voisine pour faire avancer un fiacre.

— Un fiacre ? C'est singulier ! dit Darcey."

Clarisse comes in ; her father has nothing whatever the matter with him ! but his credit is on the point of being destroyed by bankruptcy. He needs a hundred thousand crowns to save him. Valdeja offers them. But Darcey will not allow a stranger to pay the debts of his family : he puts the hundred thousand crowns at the disposition of Clarisse's father.

Let us pass on to the following scene and we shall see if Adèle d'Hervey—poor Adèle, against whom there has been this outcry because she was a respectable woman !—is

not a model of virtue (*rosière*[1]) compared to Adèle Darcey. Note, particularly, that our confrère Scribe, author of *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme* and of *Héloise et Abeilard*, is one of the warmest partizans for a dramatic censorship. Consult the archives of the State Commission on this point. Further, we will try ourselves to procure these archives, and there will be found stated our three opinions : Eugène Scribe's, Victor Hugo's and that of Alexandre Dumas—a matter not without a certain amount of interest to all who are connected with literature.

Let us return to our drama. The stage represents an elegant boudoir in the house of Madame Laferrier. Adèle is there, waiting for Rodolphe. You will admit that I was not so far wrong in calling Madame Laferrier a disreputable woman. There is, I think, another name to designate women who lend their boudoirs to friends when the latter tell their husbands that their fathers are dying in order to obtain liberty to go and meet their lovers. But set your mind at rest. Adèle and Rodolphe only come there to quarrel. True, the quarrel is sufficiently disgraceful in itself.

" Qu' avez-vous à me reprocher, madame ?

— Votre oubli de toutes les convenances. Avant hier, par exemple, quand vous me donniez le bras, oser saluer sur le boulevard mademoiselle Anastasie, une figurante de l'Opéra !

— Du chapeau seulement, sans mains, sans grace, comme on salue tout le monde.

— Je l'avais une vue déja une fois sortir de chez vous.

— C'est ma locataire. J'amie les arts, moi . . .

— Je vous prie de me rendre mes lettres et mon portrait.

— Dès demain, mon valet de chambre Sylvestre vous portera vos lettres, et, quant à votre portrait, a médaillon que j'avais fait faire, qui ne me quittail jamais, le voici, madame.

— C'est bien ! le voilà donc revenu dans mes mains. (*L'ouvrant pour le regarder.*) Dieu ! que vois-je ? et quelle indignité ! Le portrait de mademoiselle Anastasie !

— Est-il possible ? C'est délicieux ! Je me serai trompé en le prenant ce matin. (*Textuel*)."

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[1] TRANSLATOR'S NOTE, *Rosière*.—A young girl who in village life is awarded the prize of a rose for virtue.

Rodolphe goes out kissing Adèle's hand, calling her cruel, and promising never to forget her kindnesses.

"Ce pauvre Rodolphe! un charmant cavalier! dit Amélie' qui était présente a l'entretien."

One would have thought after the impertinences M. Rodolphe had been permitted to commit, Amélie would scarcely recall *ce charmant cavalier* to Adèle's memory. Perhaps, though, this might have happened, if the name of Valdeja had not been pronounced. This incident gives another turn to the conversation.

"Valdeja!" exclaims Amélie; "Sophie Marini's deadly enemy?"

"Lui-même . . . Sais-tu ce que Sophie Marini a contre lui?

— Elle ne me l'a jamais confié; mais on prétend qu'autrefois elle l'a amié. Puis; il a découvert qu'il avait des rivaux, et il s'est vengé d'une maniere indigne.

— Comment cela?

— En la faisant trouver à un diner où il avait invité tous ceux qu'elle avait préférées. On ne dit pas combien il y avait de couverts. (*Textuel.*)"

At this point, Créponne, Adèle's maid, comes on the scene. She has been hunting for her mistress for six hours past: at Rodolphe's and at Madame Marini's house. Clarisse coming to the house has revealed all: her father is not ill, and she never wrote! What is to be done? Fortunately, Amélie is there.

"Ya-t-il longtemps que vous-n'êtes allés, toi et ton mari, chez madame de Longpré, dont tu me parles souvent?

— Quinze jours environ.

— Assieds-toi là, et écris.

— Que veux-tu que je lui écrive?

— Assieds-toi toujours. (*Dictant.*) 'Si, avant de m'avoir vue, le hasard vous mettait en rapport avec mon père ou mon mari, n'oubliez pas que je suis arrivée aujourd'hui chez vous dans un état affreux; que j'y suis restée longtemps, et que je'en suis repartie en fiarce. Je vous envoie mon chapeau et mon mouchoir. Vous me les renverrez demain par votre femme de chambre.' Date et signe. Commences—tu à comprendre?

— Oui, mon bon ange!"

— En arrivant chez toi, tu te trouveras mal, et je réponds du reste.
— Dieu ! que c'est simple et bien ! (*Textuel.*)"

At this moment a servant announces that a gentleman is asking to see madame.

" Il prend bien son temps, répond Amélie ; qu'il s'en aille !
— Il prétend qu'il n'est que pour un jour à Paris, et qu'il apporte à madame des lettres et des nouvelles du prince Krimikoff.
— Ce pauvre prince ! il pense encore à moi !—
— Dis au monsieur d'attendre là dans la pièce qui touche à ce boudoir ; dans un instant, je suis à lui, je le recevrai."

Why *in the room adjoining that boudoir* we ask ? Why, of course, so that the gentleman can hear what is going to be said; there is no deeper motive behind it than that ! See for yourself, however : when the servant has gone out, the dialogue continues between Adèle and Amélie.

" Une chose m'inquiète, maintenant : ce sont ces lettres et ce portrait que Rodolphe a entre les mains.
— C'est ta faute ; je t'ai dit vingt fois de ne pas écrire. Tu veux toujours faire à ta tête !
— Il n'en a que trois, et il m'a bien promis devant toi de me les renvoyer demain par son valet de chambre.
— Espérons-le ! Allons, va-t'en vite !
— De ce côte ?
— Oh ! non, tu serais vue par cet étranger.
— Eh ! mais j'y pense, maintenant, nous sommes là a parler tout haut, et l'on entend de ton petit salon tout ce qui se dit ici.
— Qu' importe ! cet étranger ne sait peut-être pas le français."

Adèle is satisfied with the suggestion that a Russian does not understand French, the current language of Russia ; she does not reflect that a Russian who cannot talk French would not ask to speak with Amélie, who is not supposed to be a woman who knows Russian. Valdeja enters behind the two women, brought in by a servant.

" Je n'étais pas si mal où j'étais ! se dit Valdeja, et, dès qu'a travers cette légère cloison j'ai eu reconnu la voix de madame Darcey, j'eusse mérité de ne plus rien entendre de ma vie, si j'eusse perdu un mot de leur conversation ! "

What does Valdeja think of doing now ? That is quite

simple : to carry off Adèle's handkerchief and letter. Unfortunately, Amélie, when taking her friend home, has carried them away with her. But, do not be uneasy, when she returns she will bring them back, and this will give occasion to a curious scene, as you are about to hear.

Valdeja, who speaks French perfectly, although a foreigner, for he is a Spaniard, has been charged by Prince Krimikoff with a letter for M. Laferrier. This letter begins the affair. So they chat about Prince Krimikoff.

" Dans quel état l'avez-vous trouvé ? demande Amélie.

— Fort triste et fort maussade.

— Changé à ce point ! Je l'ai vu ici, il y a six ans : il était charmant.

— Je sais cela. Il m'a dit que vous l'aviez trouvé charmant.

— Il vous l'a dit ?

— Chut ! . . . Parce que je sais vos heures intimes avec lui, ce n'est pas une raison pour les publier.

— Monsieur ! M. Krimikoff est un fat . . . Je nie positivement.

— A quoi bon ? Parce qu'on arrive du fond de la Russie, nous croyez-vous en dehors de la civilisation ? Là-bas, comme ici, la vie bien entendue n'est qu'un joyeux festin ; et de quel droit. M. Krimikoff se reserverait il le privilège d'une ivresse exclusive ?

— Eh ! mais, monsieur, permettez-moi de vous dire que voilà d'affreux principes."

At the same time, as the author is careful to state, Amélie utters these words *smiling*. Valdeja continues :

" Affreux a avouer, doux à mettre en pratique.

— Monsieur !

— Ne le niez pas, je sais tout . . . Car cette lettre que j'ai là, cette lettre n'est pas pour votre mari, comme j'ai dit : elle est pour vous."

It is, indeed, unfortunate that it is for Madame Laferrier and not for M. Laferrier ; for, although they talk much about it, the spectators do not see M. Laferrier at all. It would certainly be interesting to see the husband who would adapt himself to such a wife ! Listen carefully and follow the turn the conversation is going to take.

" Mais, continue Valdeja, à votre seul aspect, je me suis repenti de m'en être chargé . . . Il me semblait cruel de vous

apporter, de la part d'un autre, des hommages que j'étais tenté de vous rendre, et de vous voir lire devant moi ce que je n'osais vous dire.

— Un rival ? . . . Permettez ! Je ne vous cacherai pas que les brilliantes qualités de M. Krimikoff, m'avaient frappée ; cependant, sans le piége qu'il m'a tendu, je serais, je l'atteste, restée irréprochable."

What, then, is the snare Prince Krimikoff has laid for Madame Laferrier ? The author does not say. But it must be the same order of snare which Valdeja sets for her. Poor Amélie ! Let us admit that she has naturally a great talent for allowing herself to be caught in a trap.

" Irréprochable ! s'écrie Valdeja avec chaleur.

— Eh ! bon Dieu ! de quel mot vous servez-vous la ? Qu'est-ce que c'est que *vertueuse* ? (*Riant.*) Ah !

— Ah ! sur mon âme, voilà d'étroites idées, d'anciennes façons bien pauvres, et je croyais la France moins arriérée. Vous arrêter un instant à de pareilles distinctions ?

— Ah ! madame, j'avais d'abord conçu une meilleure idée de vous ! "

You may imagine Amélie's joy at the thought of the good opinion the noble stranger has conceived of her. Valdeja goes on, *raising his tones* :

" Quand on adopte un régime, il faut tâcher qu'il soit bon. Je ne connais qu'un enseignement respectable, c'est celui de nos passions. La nature y est pour tout, la société pour rien. Plaisir, ivresse, délire, voilà des mots auxquels nos cœurs répondent. . . . Vous le savez, vous qui ne pouvez, même en ce moment, contenu vos pensées qui s'allument (*il lui prend la main*), vous dont le pouls s'active, dont l'œil s'enflamme et rit là en silence de tous ces aphorismes de vertu.

— Monsieur, Monsieur . . .

— A quoi bon ces vains scruples ? Je vous comprends, je vous suis, je vous devance peut-être.

— Parlons d'autre chose, je vous prie.

— Voyez, votre mémoire vous domine, vos souvenirs sont dans votre sang ; vous vous rappelez tout ce que vaut, dans la vie, un moment d'illusion.

— Laissez-moi !

— Ce que peut un bras qui serre . . .
— Laissez-moi !
— Un souffle, qui renverse !
— Oh ! grâce ! grâce ! "

You see very clearly that instead of stopping, Valdeja continues :

" Venez ! dit il en prenant Amélie par la taille.
— Ecoutez ! (*On entend le bruit d'une voiture.*) C'est mon mari ! Voilà sa voiture qui rentre."

Ah ! so we are to see this worthy M. Laferrier after all ! The noise of the carriage, which would have disturbed anybody else, helps Valdeja, on the contrary, to wind up the scene, which we should agree was becoming difficult between people who have only just met for the first time, one of whom hates and despises the other.

" Vous quitter ainsi, s'écrie Valdeja, sans un gage, sans un souvenir ? (*Apercevat le mouchoir resté sur la table.*) Ah ! Ce mouchoir, qui est le votre . . .
— Monsieur . . .
— Là, là, sur mon cœur ; il y restera comme votre image !
— Monsieur, rendez-moi mon mouchoir.
— Jamais ! Adieu, adieu, madame ! "

And, in spite of Amélie's cries of " My handkerchief, my handkerchief ! " Valdeja goes out, forgetting to take leave at his departure. The curtain falls. Let us now see what happens in the third act.

In the first scene of the third act, we are at Valdeja's rooms in a furnished house. He is alone, seated at a table, holding in his hand the handkerchief which he has taken from Madame Laferrier. He waits for his moujik Mourawieff. Mourawieff has been deputed by Valdeja to procure the letters and portrait *artfully*. Perhaps Valdeja, as a civilised being, ought to have lent assistance to the skill of a moujik only arrived in Paris the previous day, who, consequently, could not be very much up to date in French manners ; but he has overlooked this detail, which, as it concerns the reputation

of the wife of a friend, deserves, perhaps, that some attention should be paid to the matter.

The consequence is that Mourawieff acts as cunningly as a moujik; he waited for Rodolphe's servant at the door of No. 71 of the rue de Provence, where the frequenter of the café Tortoni stays; he makes sure that the servant is the bearer of the letters and portrait; and, in wrestling terms, he trips him up. Sylvestre falls, loosing letters and portrait. Mourawieff takes possession of them and arrives, running. Do not let us complain: Mourawieff's clumsiness is a skilful move on the part of the author and will give us an excellent scene presently. I say presently, because, before it, there is one which we do not consider very happy—from the moral point of view be it understood: we are not concerning ourselves here, be careful to notice, with the literary merits of the drama. No, we will imagine ourselves Academicians—what more can you desire? we are all mortal!—commissioned to make a report on the most moral play acted in 1832 at the boulevard theatres; our confrère Scribe competes for the prize for morality: we examine his play with all the more care as we know he is a fanatical partisan of the censorship, and we make our report.

The unfortunate scene is that where Valdeja opens the packet and reads the letters addressed to M. Rodolphe by his friend's wife. The perusal of them confirms him in the resolution to leave his friend in ignorance of everything; but he takes upon himself to avenge that friend's honour and to fight a duel with Rodolphe. He therefore takes a brace of pistols and a couple of duelling swords and makes himself ready to go in search of Rodolphe at 71 rue de Provence. He meets the man he is looking for on the threshold of his door. Rodolphe has also, like Valdeja, a brace of pistols in his hands and two swords under his arm.

That Valdeja, who probably wishes a duel without witnesses, should take pistols and swords and go armed

like a Malbrouk on his way to the war, in search of the man of whom he has to demand the vindication of a friend's honour, is conceivable enough in all conscience. But that Rodolphe, who has none of these motives, instead of sending his seconds as is done between well-bred people, should come himself and go up the stairs with sword under his arm and pistols in hand, instead of leaving all the weapons in his carriage, is altogether senseless. No matter, for, as we have already said, we are not fishing in those waters. The scene containing this improbable incident is original and well drawn; that is sufficient. Bravo! bravo! bravo! But you shall see where it vexes us that our confrère has taken advantage of the absence of the censorship. The two young people agree to fight with pistols. It is Rodolphe who suggests the weapon.

"Le pistolet, soit! répond Valdeja.

— Chacun les nôtres.

— J'y consens.

— Dites-moi donc,—reprend Rodolphe tenant, ainsi que Valdeja, sa boîte à la main,—nous avons l'air de bijoutiers, courant les pratiques.

— Pourquoi non? La mort est un chaland tout comme un autre, et nos âmes sont, dit on, des joyaux divins.

— *Vieilles idées sans base et sans soutien!*

— Pour l'un des deux, Rodolphe, le doute aura cessé d'exister aujourd'hui.

— Va comme il est dit!"

Both go out. The second scene of the third act brings us into a room in Évrard's house. The whole family is in a state of rejoicing; Darcey's 100,000 francs have saved Évrard from ruin. They bless Darcey. Albert Melville, Clarisse's future husband, takes advantage of this moment of expansiveness to try to obtain from his fiancée a positive statement as to the state of her affections. Clarisse feels that of a sister for him, the tenderness of a friend, but she will never be in love with him. Albert is resigned; enumerating Clarisse's excellent qualities, he

thinks he will be happy in his lot. The scene is interrupted by the arrival of Adèle. For a long time she has not been to her father's house, but, invited by him as well as her husband to a little family gathering, she complies with the invitation. Behind her enters M. and Madame Dusseuil, her uncle and aunt. As for M. Darcey, no one knows if he is coming; Adèle has not seen him since the morning. As they are wondering about his coming, the door opens and he enters pale and constrained.

Now begins a scene, dramatic in its simple domesticity. Darcey has found his wife's letters. The author does not tell us how, for these letters cannot have been put in his way for two hours after the departure of Valdeja; which leads us to surmise that, Valdeja not having returned within two hours, he must be dead. Never mind by what means Darcey has discovered the letters; he has them, and that is the chief point, and he comes as before a family tribunal to ask each member what is the punishment a friend of his ought to inflict on a wife who has deceived him.

"Je pardonnerais, mon frère, dit Clarisse, dans l'espoir d'obtenir par le repentir ce qu'un autre sentiment n'aurait pas en assez de force pour faire naître.

— Moi, je la tuerais! dit Albert."

Adèle's father is questioned in his turn.

"ÉVRARD.

Ma foi, je la mènerais à ses parents; je les ferais juges entre elle et moi; je leur dirais: 'La voilà! le mauvais germe a étouffé le bon; il a porté ses fruits; ils sont murs, récoltez-les! et je la leur laisserais.

DARCEY.

Eh bien, c'est vous qui l'avez jugée.

ADÈLE, *avec anxiété.*

Mais qui donc? . . .

DARCEY.

Je ne la tuerai pas, je ne la traînerai pas sur les bancs d'un

tribunal ; mais je vous la rendrai, mon père ! Car, cet homme, c'ést moi ! Cette femme, c'est votre fille !

ADÈLE.

Ce n'est pas vrai !

ÉVRARD.

Adèle vous a trahir ?

ADÈLE.

Je ne suis pas coupable ! il ne m'aime plus : c'est un prétexte.

DARCEY.

Et Rodolphe, l'avez-vous oublié depuis hier ?

ADÈLE.

Qui, Rodolphe ?

DARCEY.

Rodolphe, votre amant !

ADÈLE.

Je ne connais pas de Rodolphe !

DARCEY.

Vous ne connaissez pas de Rodolphe ?

ADÈLE.

Non.

DARCEY, *lui mettant ses lettres sous les yeux.*

Lisez donc ! lisez ! Voilà les pièces du procès ; ces lettres, ce sont les siennes. Adieu !

Justice est faite ! . . ."

Nothing further remains for Darcey to do but to be avenged on Rodolphe ; but, as one might expect, he has been killed by Valdeja. In the fourth act, we are at Adèle's house : it is modest to the very verge of mediocrity, for Adèle is short of money ; she holds a pen in her hand and has paper before her ; she is on the point of humbling herself to her husband and asking help from him. She prefers that humiliation to becoming the mistress of an Italian banker named Rialto. Sophie and Amélie enter. You can guess the scene : the pen is flung across the

table, the paper upon which the first letters were already traced is torn up ; the proposals of Rialto are accepted. The shameful treaty bears the stamp of self-sacrifice. Albert Melville has lost his position in the offices of the Exchequer ; Rialto, who is at the head of all the loans, gets him restored to it and Albert Melville marries Clarisse. What is the reason for this anxiety for the welfare of Albert Melville and Clarisse on the part of the three women ? Stop a minute ! The marriage of these two young people will cause Valdeja to give way to despair. Whereupon, Valdeja comes forward. He comes on behalf of Darcey, whose kindness of heart is touched by the physical sufferings of the woman : as woman, not as his wife. Adèle is nothing to him personally now, only from the point of view of ordinary humanity ; she no longer belongs to his family; she is his neighbour merely. Adèle, who has nearly accepted this conjugal charity, refuses it at the instigation of the two women. Valdeja is more cheerful than usual : he smiles in spite of himself at the contretemps which destroys the prospect of the marriage of Albert and Clarisse for ever. But, when promising to yield herself to Rialto, Adèle asks that Albert's post may be given back to him, and, within ten minutes' time, the post is restored to him, the marriage is arranged and the young folk are wedded! It is not very probable that all this could take place in ten minutes ; but one knows that actual times does not exist on the stage. When Valdeja learns that it is the hatred of the three women which has just destroyed his last hope, he renews his oath of hatred, which they listen to with laughter. The curtain falls upon that oath. It rises upon a pretty garden with a summer-house on the left.

For three years Adèle is Rialto's mistress, and she lives with him just as though she were his wife. She has all she wants, even to the lover of her heart's desire. This lover's name is M. Hippolyte. Rialto promises to buy her houses, carriages and horses, and she loathes him.

M. Hippolyte gives her a simple bouquet and she worships him. See him enter upon the scenes.

" Bonjour ! ma chère Adèle !

— Ah ! arrivez donc, monsieur ! Je m'entretenais de vous.

— Et, moi, je pensais à vous. *Vous le voyez, ma chère Adèle, des fleurs, votre image . . .*"

It is evident that if Hippolyte has made the conquest of Madame Darcey, it is an affair of the heart in which her mind has no part whatever. Besides, Hippolyte is grave to solemnity. He sends Créponne, the chamber-maid, away and stays alone with Adèle. It is she who begins the conversation.

" Voyous, qu'est-ce qui pesè si fort sur la gaieté aujourd'hui ? demande-t-elle.

— J'ai quelque chose de si important à te dire.

— Quoi donc ?

— Ma chère Adèle, depuis trois mois, je suis aimé de toi ; depuis six semaines, j'ai formé le projet d'être ton mari, et je viens te j'annoncer.

— Ah ! ah ! ah ! ah ! fait Adèle éclatant de rire.

— Qu'y a-t-il donc de si risible ?

— Je ris parce que . . . Ah ! ah ! ah ! mais c'est une plaisanterie."

This hilarity, sufficiently ill-timed when confronted with so serious a proposal, does not disconcert Hippolyte in the least. He had come of age the previous day and wished to profit by his majority to marry Adèle in hot haste. Rialto is announced.

" C'est votre père ? demande ingénument Hippolyte.

— Oui, mon ami ; il faut partir à l'instant, par ici, par la porte de ce pavillion.

— Pourquoi donc ?

— Il ne faut pas qu'il vous voie, ou tout serait perdu ! Éloignez-vous, de grace !

— *Du tout* ! Je veux voir monsieur votre père, moi ; j'ai à lui parler."

You guess why Hippolyte wants to speak to Rialto ; Hippolyte, who attributes Adèle's immoderate laughter

to playfulness of character, wishes to ask Rialto for his daughter's hand in marriage! Rialto laughs as loudly at this demand as Adèle had done. The poor lover might just as well have demanded the hand of the daughter of Democritus. But Hippolyte insists more pertinaciously to Rialto than he has done to Adèle; his tutor, to whom he has boasted of the virtue and beauty of the woman he loves, comes. The joke continues for about ten minutes; and then Rialto, whose laughter has suffered several checks, thinks it is time to put a stop to it. He sends the lover to the right about and takes Adèle by the arm to go a walk with her. You shall see what happens; and one thing you certainly will not have expected!

" HIPPOLYTE, *arrêtant Rialto par le bras.*

Monsieur, c'est beaucoup plus grave que vous ne pensez!

RIALTO.

C'est possible; mais, si vous etes malade du cerveau, je ne suis pas médecin.

ADÈLE.

Mon Dieu! laissons là cet entretien.

HIPPOLYTE.

Non, madame; je forcerai bien monsieur votre père à ne pas me refuser.

RIALTO.

C'est ce que nous verrons.

HIPPOLYTE.

Un mot suffira. Et, puis qu'il n'y a pas d'autre moyen, daignez me répondre, monsieur, connaissez-vous l'honneur?

RIALTO.

Eh bien, oui, je le connais. Qu'est-ce que vous en voulez dire?

HIPPOLYTE.

Tenez-vous au vôtre et à celui de votre famille?

RIALTO.

Sans doute que j'y tiens.

HIPPOLYTE.

Arrangez-vous, alors, pour qu'il ne souffre pas des atteintes que je lui ai portées, et tâchez de réparer avec le mari le dommage que l'amant lui a fait.

RIALTO.

L'amant ?

ADÈLE.

Ne l'écoutez-pas !

HIPPOLYTE.

L'amant ! Depuis trois mois, madame m'appartient !

RIALTO.

Ah ! ah ! qu'est-ce que vous me dites là ?

HIPPOLYTE.

Ce qui est.

ADÈLE.

C'est une horreur !

HIPPOLYTE.

Et si vous avez un cœur de père . . .

RIALTO.

Eh ! monsieur, je ne suis pas son père !

HIPPOLYTE.

Vous n'êtes pas son père ?

RIALTO.

Ni son père, ni son frère, ni son oncle, ni son mari . . . Comprenez-vous, maintenant ?

HIPPOLYTE, *stupéfie.*

Ah ! ce n'est pas possible !

RIALTO.

Aïe ! aïe ! belle dame, vous m'en faisiez donc en cachette ? Et mes billets de mille fancs comptaient pour deux, à ce qu'il parait !

ADÈLE.

Il n'en est rien, je vous jure !

RIALTO.

Ah ! ah ! ah ! Et vous, mon brave, vous voulez épouser des femmes qui vivent séparées de leurs maris, et que des protecteurs consolent ! . . ."

We think we ought to spare our readers, especially our feminine ones, the rest of the scene. This may, indeed, be *nature*, as they say in studio terms; but it is vile nature! Pah! And to think that once in my life I did something nearly like it in a play entitled *Le Fils de l'Émigré*! But do not be anxious, when I come to that, I will deal with myself severely!

At the fifth act, we find ourselves in a *mean room of wretched appearance*. Three years have passed since Adèle has been turned out by Rialto and deserted by Hippolyte. Sophie waits for Adèle. The two women recognise one another.

"Ah! c'est toi, Sophie, dit Adèle.

— Tu me reconnais? C'est heureux! Pour moi, je l'avoue j'aurais en quelque peine . . .

— Je suis donc bein changée? reprend Adèle.

— Tu as l'air souffrant . . .

— Et toi, depuis trois ans que tu as quitte Paris? . . .

— J'étais allée en Belgique avec mon mari, lorsqu'il est parti pour ce pays-là, sans le dire à ses créanciers, car les fournisseurs en sont tous là: se ruiner en entreprises, en spéculations, quand il y a tant d'autres moyens!

— Et il ne lui est rien resté?

— Rien, que des dettes; répond Sophie avec amertume. Mais, moi, *j'avais encore des espérances*: un oncle paralytique, M. de Saint-Brice; qui, veuf et sans enfants, avait une immense fortune, et je suis revenue en France à Paris, où j'ai appris que, *par la grâce du ciel*, il venait de mourir. Mais, vois l'horreur, il m'a déshéritée!"

It is Valdeja who induced M. de Saint Brice to strike this great blow; so you see that the love for Sophie felt by the ex-attaché to the Embassy at St. Petersburg has not made much progress. We say the *ex-attaché*, because during the six years he stays in Paris to attend to the affairs of his friend Darcey and those of his pupil Hippolyte, Valdeja must be no longer attached to but detached from the Embassy. During those last three years Adèle has made the acquaintance of M. Léopold, the son of a rich wine merchant, who has taken up his place as his father's

successor ; *but unfortunately this succession has not lasted long.*

" Et tu ne l'as pas abandonné ? demande Sophie.

Je le voudrais, dit Adèle ; je n'ose pas. Il est si violent, il me tuerait ! "

Besides, Adèle has discovered secrets which make her tremble : M. Léopold *entices extravagant young men and robs them.* She has no hope left except in her sister, to whom she has written.

Créponne enters and gives a letter to Adèle ; it is from Clarisse, who is always good and charitable and loving ! Her husband has forbidden her to see her sister ; but, at two o'clock, hidden by a cloak, she will come on foot. Adèle must arrange to be alone. Sophie reads the letter at the same time with Adèle. She sees in it a means of injuring Clarisse and will meditate upon it.

" Adieu, dit elle à madame Darcey. Si j'ai quelque chose de nouveau, je viendrai te revoir.

— Je crains que Léopold ne se fâche, et que cela ne lui dèplaise.

— Eh bien ! par exemple !

— Pour plus de sûreté, quand tu auras à me parler, ne monte pas par le grand escalier, où l'on pourrait te voir, mais viens par celui-ci, dont voici la clef."

The key is just the thing Sophie wants to carry out her plan. But now that she has the key, the only thing she is in need of is some money with which to buy food.

" Tu n'aurais pas quelque argent à me prêter dit elle ?

— J'en ai si peu !

— Et, moi, je n'en ai pas du tout. Je te rendrai cela dès que j'aurai obtenu ce que jé sollicite.

— Bientot ?

— Je te le promets.

— A la bonne heure, car sans cela . . . Tiens ! "

At this moment M. Léopold arrives ; he smells the money, pounces upon it and confiscates it, as he says by *order of the police.* That will give you an idea of monsieur's

ways of procedure; but you will see plenty more. He wants money, much money.

Adèle must ask it from her parents.

" Vous savez bien qu'ils sont morts de chagrin, lui dit Adèle.
— Oui, à ce qu'ils disent, répond Léopold."

This is pretty talk, too pretty, indeed. There is still M. Rialto, but Adèle refuses to apply to him. To M. Hippolyte then . . .

" ADÈLE.

Plutôt mourir que d'avoir recours à lui !

LÉOPOLD, *haussant la voix.*

Il le faut, cependant ; car je veux, et vous ne me connaissez pas, quand on me résiste.

ADÈLE.

Léopold, Léopold, vous m'effrayez ! . . . (*a part*).
Ah ! Dieu ! qui m'arrachera de ses mains ?

LÉOPOLD.

Là, au secrétaire . . . voilà ce qu'il vous faut pour écrire.

Entre Créponne.

CRÉPONNE, *bas à Adèle.*

Une dame, enveloppée d'un manteau, est là dans votre chambre.

ADÈLE, *de même.*

C'est ma sœur, c'est Clarisse !

LÉOPOLD, *l'arrêtant par le bras.*

Ou vas-tu ? Tu ne sortiras pas d'ici que tu n'aies écrit.

ADÈLE.

O mon Dieu !

LÉOPOLD, *la faisant asseoir au secrétaire.*

Allons, une lettre à la Sévigné, et pour cela, je vais dicter : ' Cher Hippolyte ' . . .

ADÈLE.

Je ne mettrai jamais cela.

LÉOPOLD.

Hippolyte, tout court.

ADÈLE, *écrivant.*

' Monsieur ' . . .

LÉOPOLD.

A la bonne heure, je n'y tiens pas. (*Dictant.*) Monsieur, une ancienne amie bien malheureuse . . .

CRÉPONNE.

C'est bien vrai !

LÉOPOLD.

Je ne mens jamais . . . (*Dictant.*) Est menacée d'un affreux danger dont vous seul pouvez le sauver.

ADÈLE.

Mais c'est le tromper !

LÉOPOLD.

Qu'en savez-vous ? Je ne mens jamais . . . (*Dictant.*) 'Si tout souvenir, si toute humanité n'est pas éteinté dans votre cœur, venez à son secours ! Elle vous attendra aujourd'hai rue . . . Mets ton nom et ton adresse. 'Prenez avec vous de l'or, beaucoup d'or. Vous saurez pourquoi.'

ADÈLE, *indignée.*

Je n'écrirai jamais cela.

LÉOPOLD, *dictant d'un ton impératif.*

' Vous saurez pourquoi, et j'ose croire que vous m'en remercierez.' (*Lui prenant les mains.*)

Allons ! écris, je le veux !

ADÈLE.

Mais que prétendez-vous donc faire ? le forcer à jouer, le dépouiller ?

LÉOPOLD.

Cela me regarde . . . Signe ! "

Adèle signs and Leopold goes out. But Adèle quickly orders Créponne to run to Hippolyte, to warn him of the snare that is being laid for him. Adèle then goes to her sister. Créponne stays alone talking to herself while putting on her shawl. Whilst addressing herself to this twofold occupation, the door of the little staircase opens slowly, and Albert appears, shrouded in a cloak.

" Encore un qui arrive, dit la femme de chambre. Il en sort donc ici de tous côtés ? "

You perhaps suppose that Créponne, who is not tongue-tied, will go up to the newcomer and ask him who he can be to have possession of his mistress's house key? But no, she quietly moves off to the opposite side. Ah! confrère, though you are very clever and ingenious, I would verily rather have committed what they call in theatrical language *un loup*. True, had Créponne spoken to the man wrapped in a cloak, she would have recognised Albert, whom she would have told that his wife was there and that would have been the end of scene one of the fifth act.

You understand, dear reader? Sophie had sent the key Adèle gave her to Albert, and, when doing so, took good care, of course, to tell Melville that his wife had arranged a meeting with Valdeja; then she writes to Valdeja, in Clarisse's name, to tell him he will find her . . . where? I have no notion, for the author of the play does not give the address of the house. It is a needless precaution, and makes no difference, be assured!

Albert, who wishes to hear all, hides in a cupboard. Whilst he is hiding, Valdeja enters! You can guess the situation. Valdeja and Clarisse meet; great is their astonishment, especially on the part of Clarisse; but, finally, they explain matters. The sole thing that Clarisse sees in it all is that she is incurring a real danger.

"Ah! mon Dieu! s'écrie-t-elle, je suis perdue, déshonorée! Qui pourrait me secourir, me protéger?
— Moi, Clarisse! dit Albert sortant du cabinet."

Albert and Valdeja exchange friendly greetings; they have learned to esteem one another. Valdeja goes away by a door at the back. Albert gives money to Adèle; Clarisse gives her a gold chain, then Albert and Clarisse go out by the little staircase. Scarcely have they disappeared before a noise is heard outside, then a pistol shot and cries of "Help! murder!" Adèle rushes terrified towards the stairs, and the curtain falls without any further explanation; but those who are anxious to guess

without being told suspect that Léopold has taken Albert for Hippolyte and fired on him. The second part of the fifth act shows Adèle on a pallet-bed, ill and coughing and at death's door. Having spent her last crowns in a lottery, she has nothing to fall back upon but a gold chain which she has given to Sophie to sell. She would fain have chosen a more reliable agency, for she begins to mistrust her former friend; but it is necessary that it should be Sophie who sells the chain. You shall see why.

" Ma chère, cela va mal! dit Sophie en rentrant. Tu sais, cette chaîne que tu tenais de ta sœur?

— Eh bien?

— J'ai été pour la vendre chez le bijoutier notre voisin, un vieux qui l'a regardée attentivement; puis il m'a dit: 'De qui tenez-vous cette chaîne?—D'une dame de mes amies.—Qui est-elle?—Que vous importe?—C'est que, a-t-il ajouté en feuilletant un registre, cette chaîne, à ce qu'il me semble, est au nombre des objets qui, lors de l'affaire Léopold, nous ont été signalés par la police.'"

How can the chain have been marked by the police when Adèle had received it from her sister before the assassination? Then Sophie lost her head; and with good reason, too! When she sees how clever the police are she runs away; the jeweller calls his assistants and they follow her; they know she is there.

" Mais on ignore qui tu es?

— Peut-être, car j'ai rencontré, en montant, la propriétaire.

— Je ne la connais pas.

— En bien, sais-tu quelle est cette femme? Notre ancienne amie!

— Amélie Laferrier?

— Elle-même!"

What a pity it was not her husband! We shall, perhaps, see him. But he is not there, you may be sure, and I have a great longing to be presented to him. At this moment there is a knock at the door. It is a Sister of Charity. Adèle has written to the mayor, under the name of Madame Laurencin; she has depicted her misery in pitiable terms;

the Sister of Mercy has been told and comes. Guess who that Sister of Charity is? It is Clarisse! Clarisse, who finds her sister weak, broken down, dying! Clarisse is in mourning, for Albert is dead. When Adèle recognises Clarisse, she faints away. Whilst Clarisse is bringing her back to consciousness with salts, the magistrates enter, brought by Amélie Laferrier. Naturally the meeting lacks effusion. The magistrates have come to arrest Madame Laurencin; but, as they must do this legally, they have sent to fetch the mayor. He arrives, and is Darcey, Amélie's husband, having become mayor of his arrondissement, thanks to conduct diametrically opposite to that of his wife! He is followed by his faithful Valdeja. The author does not tell us if Valdeja has been appointed deputy mayor under Darcey; it is likely, for, without this, how would he be there?

"Quelle est cette femme que l'on parle d'arrêter? demande Darcey.

— C'est la vôtre, monsieur! votre pauvre femme!

— Ma femme! répond Darcey, qui repousse le mot avec indignation."

It is a rude shock for Adèle: knowing herself to be dying, she raises herself up and asks her husband's forgiveness.

"Jamais! répond Darcey."

Adèle utters a cry and falls into an armchair.

"DARCEY, *se laissant entrainer, dit à Valdeja, qui le pousse vers Adèle.*

Tu le veux? Eh bien . . . (*En ce moment, Adèle rend le dernier soupir.*) Dieu! il n'est plus temps!

VALDEJA.

Elle expire! (*À Amélie et à Sophie.*) Femmes, prenez ce cadavre! prenez-le donc, il est à vous . . . Vos œuvres méritaient un salaire: le voilà! Honte à vous et à toutes vos semblables! (*À Darcey*) *À toi la liberté*!

DARCEY, *lui montrant Clarisse.*

Et à toi, je l'espère, bientôt le bonheur!"

These two last touches are a trifle harsh, it seems to us, before the body of Adèle and Clarisse's mourning garb ; so harsh that, were we members of the Academy and deputed to award the prize for morality, it would be a ground for withholding the prize from the drama *Dis ans de la vie d'une femme.*

CHAPTER III

Doligny manager of the theatre in Italy—Saint-Germain bitten by the tarantula—How they could have livened up Versailles if Louis-Philippe had wished it—The censorship of the Grand-Duke of Tuscany—The bindings of printer Batelli—*Richard Darlington*, *Angèle*, *Antony* and *La Tour de Nesle* performed under the name of Eugène Scribe

THE curious discussion to which we have referred[1] proves, among other things, that the author of *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme*, the drama to which Mercier or Rétif de la Bretonne hardly dared subscribe their names, holds two very distinct opinions, which he does not reckon upon reconciling: one as legislator, and one as poet, since he asked the State Commission to suppress the *small immoral theatres*, and applied for a censorship which should be a salutary check to restrain talent from the *excesses of all kinds* to which it is too commonly given. The fact is that, had there been a censorship in 1832, my confrère Scribe's talent, which I appreciate more than any one, restrained by *a salutary check*, would never have given to timorous souls the spectacle of a play which has remained, not as the model, but as the most advanced specimen, of dramatic *eccentricity*. It was M. Scribe, who, in the following sentence which he pronounced before the State Council, suggested to me the word I wanted—

"There is not much money made by really literary plays; success is often achieved better by *eccentricities* and *attacks against morality and the government*."

[1] See Appendix.

Furthermore, my illustrious confrère possesses a fine reputation as a man of moral character, not only in France but still more abroad; and I am going to relate an anecdote on this subject, which has its amusing side.

I lived for two years in Florence before a single theatrical manager thought of playing anything of mine; because I was an immoral man, no play, whether in the original or translated, could be performed in any one of the theatres of the City of Flowers. One fine morning, when I was still in bed, I heard a voice I knew in my sitting-room, and the sound of a friend's name. The voice and the name were those of Doligny. You remember that I spoke about Doligny in connection with the Tompson of *Richard Darlington*, and that I paid full justice to the remarkable manner in which he had acted the part. Very well, it was Doligny, who, actor and manager, came with a French company to seek his fortune in Italy. Everywhere else fortune has three forelocks: in Italy it has only one; everywhere else, it turns on a single wheel: in Italy, it turns on two. Which is to say that, in Italy, more than anywhere else, fortune is for everybody, and particularly for the managers of literary enterprises, an Atlanta difficult to overtake and to seize by the hair. Doligny, then, went from Turin to Milan, from Milan to Rome, from Rome to Naples, from Naples to Venice, from Venice to Bologna, in the hope of overtaking fortune. He had not yet succeeded. Finally, he thought he saw a vision of gold in the direction of Florence. He smote his forehead and said to himself: Why have I not thought of that before? What he had not thought of was my presence at Florence. I carry about with me—where it comes from I have no idea; but there it is, indeed—I carry about an atmosphere of life and excitement which has become proverbial. I lived three years at Saint-Germain; well, the inhabitants themselves, respectable subjects of the Sleeping Beauty, did not know themselves

any longer. I communicated to the town a spirit of energy which they took at first for a sort of epidemic, a contagious fever, like that produced by the bite of the Neapolitan spider. I bought the theatre, and the best actors of Paris, coming to supper with me, played from time to time, before sitting down to table to give themselves an appetite, either *Hamlet* or *Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle*, or *Les Demoiselles de Saint Cyr*, for the benefit of the poor. Ravelet had not horses enough, Collinet had not rooms enough, and the railway admitted to me, once, an increase of 20,000 francs takings per annum since I lived at Saint-Germain. It is true that, at the time of the elections, Saint-Germain considered me too *immoral* to have the honour of being its representative. Saint-Germain had then waked up, or nearly so. It had its forest for horse exercise, went to the theatre and set up on my terrace fireworks which they sent for from Paris, to the great astonishment of Versailles, which, from time to time, rose out of its tomb and looked with vacant eyes over the hills of Louveciennes, and said in dying tones: "What is Saint-Germain doing to make such a commotion as this? Look at me, do I move? Good heavens! When one is dead, it is not a time for having fireworks, going to the play or riding on horseback! Look at me, I sleep like an Academician, and I even push respect for conventions to the point of never snoring!"

Versailles lay down again in its gilded sepulchre, where, as it said, it never even snored. One day the king was annoyed by the noise which came from the direction of Saint-Germain, so much so that he took heed not to hear the faintest breath of wind coming from Versailles. He sent for M. de Montalivet, although he had no love for intellectual people. Montalivet and Vatout were the two exceptions at the court.

"My dear Count," said Louis-Philippe, "do you know what has happened?"

"What, sire?"

"We have succeeded in waking up Saint-Germain (they had made the king think he had brought about this miracle himself); we will manage to galvanise Versailles into life, with the picture gallery and fountains, on each first Sunday in the month!"

"Sire," replied Montalivet, "would you like Versailles instead of being as gloomy as death to be merry even to the point of foolishness!"

"My dear Count," replied the king, "I will not conceal from you that it would give me the greatest pleasure."

"Very well, Sire, Dumas has a fortnight's durance as National Guardsman: command that he spend it here at Versailles."

The king turned his back on M. de Montalivet and did not speak a word to him for a month after. What came of it? Versailles became more and more gloomy, and, after passing from melancholy to darkness, passed from darkness to funereal depths.

As to Saint-Germain, I do not know what became of it; but I have been assured that, since my departure, it has been seized with the spleen and simply shakes with agony. Now it was the knowledge of this vivifying quality which attracted Doligny to Florence. He said to himself: As Dumas is in Tuscany, Tuscany must have again become the department of the Arno, and we shall laugh and earn money. Doligny was mistaken: people laugh all over Italy; but they do not laugh at all in Tuscany. As to earning money there, I only knew the Comte de Larderette who made a fortune there; but his speculation had nothing literary about it. . . . I listened to Doligny's exposition of plans with a growing melancholy which could not fail to have discouraged him.

"Well," he asked me, "am I mistaken?"

"In what?"

"Do you not go to the court?"

"As little as I can; but I do go."

"Do you not go into society?"

" As little as possible ; but, of course, I do see something of it."

" Have you no friends ? "

" As few as possible ; I have some."

" Do you think my actors are poor ones ? "

" I do not know them."

" Do you not think the performance of your plays will pique people's curiosity ? "

" Yes, indeed."

" Do you not believe, in short, that, thanks to all this, I can make money ? "

" I believe you can ; but . . . "

" But what ? "

" You must do it with other plays than mine."

" Why so ? "

" Because they will not allow you to play them."

" They will refuse to let me perform your plays ? "

" Yes."

" What reason will they give for their refusal ? "

" They won't give any."

" All the same, my dear friend, there must be some reason at the bottom."

" No doubt."

" Tell me what it is."

" My friend, you are asking me to make a painful confession."

" Tell me what it is."

" I do not know how to tell you a thing that I am ashamed to confess even to myself."

" Remember that my fortune depends on it ! "

" My friend, I am an immoral author."

" Bah ! "

" Yes."

" Who said so ? "

" *Le Constitutionnel* ; so the thing has spread abroad from the east to the west, from the south to the north."

" You fill me with dismay ! "

"What else can I do! . . ."

"Still, I am going to send them your plays."

"Send them, but it will be useless."

"But surely when they have read them . . ."

"Yes, but they won't read them."

"Yet they will refuse?"

"For the sake of appearances."

"Well, I wish to have a clear conscience in the matter."

"Have a clear conscience, my dear fellow; it will only cost you your expenses for hiring, if you have already hired the theatre."

"Why of course I have hired it."

"The deuce! Send the plays then."

"This very day."

"Go! only let me know of the refusal directly you receive it."

"What's the good?"

"Who knows? Perhaps I may then have some fresh idea."

"Why have you not one now?"

"Ah! my dear fellow, ideas are capricious damsels which will not let themselves be taken except when they fancy, and the whim of my idea is not to produce anything until after the refusal of the grand-ducal censorship."

"All right, we must humour your fancy I suppose."

Doligny went away in despair at the probable refusal which threatened him, and yet with a certain degree of hopefulness in the idea that might spring up from that refusal. Three day later I saw him again. Owing to the protection of Belloc the ambassador, a delightful man, the refusal was only delayed for three days. This was a great favour; it might have been put off for a month, six weeks—for ever!

"Well?" I said, when I caught sight of Doligny.

"Well, as you said."

"Refused?"

"Refused."

" What plays did you send ? "

" *Richard Darlington*, *Antony*, *Angèle*, *La Tour de Nesle*."

" Heavens ! You went to work with a vengeance ! the four most immoral plays of an immoral author."

" Do you think if I had sent others ? "

" Useless."

" Then, the only thing left is to make use of your idea ! "

" You had set special store by those four plays ? "

" I believe they would have produced the best results. However, if you think you can obtain leave for others more easily . . . "

" Oh ! that does not matter."

" Why ? "

" Well, I have taken upon me to obtain permission, that is all you mind about ? "

" Of course ! will you undertake that."

" I will."

I picked up my hat.

" You are going ? "

" Come with me."

" I will follow you with confidence."

" That is right."

I was writing at that time a big work on painting, entitled *La Galerie des Offices*. I took Doligny to the printer's.

" My dear Batelli," I said as I entered, " you must do me a service."

" With pleasure, Monsou Doumasse."

" This is it."

" What is it ? "

" I want you to re-bind these four plays, to change the four titles and to put another author's name to them."

" That is easy enough. Just tell me exactly what you want."

" You see this one ? "

" *Richard Darlington*, drama in three acts of seven scenes, by Monsou Alessandre Doumasse."

"Just so. Very well, you must substitute *L'Ambitieux ou le Fils du bourreau*, by M. Eugène Scribe."

"Bene! Next?"

"You see this?"

"*Angèle*, drama in five acts by Monsou Alessandre Doumasse."

"You must put: *L'Échelle de femmes*, by M. Eugène Scribe."

"Bene! Next?"

"You see this one?"

"*Antony*, drama in five acts by Monsou Alessandre Doumasse."

"Put *L'Assassin par amour*, by M. Eugène Scribe."

"Bene! Next?"

"You see this one?"

"*La Tour de Nesle*, by MM. Gaillardet et * * *."

"Put: *L'Adultère puni*, by M. Eugène Scribe."

"Bene! bene!"

In an hour's time, the bindings were set up, sewed, and glued; the same day the four plays were deposited on the censor's desk. Three days after they were returned signed for permission.

The censors had not made any remarks whatever, they had not found a single word to say against them. It is a wonder that the Committee of Censorship had not proposed to the grand-duke to found a prize for virtue, in favour of four such edifying plays. That same night, the whole town, except MM. les Censeurs knew that the performance of four plays by M. Alexandre Dumas had been sanctioned under the moral signature of Eugène Scribe. I never had such a success. They thought these four works the very perfection of innocence; the grand-duke, the most innocent man in his grand-duchy, was applauded to the echo!

Scribe, on that occasion, was about to receive the Cross of the Commander of Saint-Joseph. Fortunately for Scribe, somebody or other revealed the trickery to the grand-duke. Scribe was beside himself with fear.

CHAPTER IV

A few words on *La Tour de Nesle* and M. Frédérick Gaillardet—The *Revue des Deux Mondes*—M. Buloz—The *Journal des Voyages*—My first attempt at Roman history—*Isabeau de Bavière*—A witty man of five foot nine inches.

LET us leave Italy—to which we shall soon return—and come back to our plays, which, by an innocent subterfuge, as a moral author called it, I had played in the capital of His Imperial Highness the Grand-Duke of Tuscany.

Two had already been acted at Paris in the month of April 1832, at which date we have arrived—*Antony* and *Richard*; but there were still two to be performed, *La Tour de Nesle* and *Angèle*. May I be prevented, now I come to speak of the making of the first of these plays, from saying anything which may arouse the dormant susceptibilities of M. Gaillardet! Since 2 June 1832, that is to say for the past twenty-five years, I have composed upwards of forty dramas and eight hundred volumes; it will, therefore, be taken for granted that I have no interest whatever in laying claim to one paternity more or less. But the matter made such a stir at the time, it unravelled itself so ostensibly, that I have scarcely the right to pass it over in silence; but, whilst we are upon the subject, I promise only to cite the facts of which I have proof, and to divest those facts of any sentiment either of hatred or of attack. Since that time, M. Gaillardet has left France for America, Paris for New Orleans. To my great joy, he has, I am told, made a fortune out there; to my still greater joy, my books, so

I am assured, have not been detrimental to his good fortune. So much the better! Happy he to whom Providence gives a double share of rest, and, when scarcely a third of life is passed, after a brilliant début, permits him to throw down his pen and to rest on his laurels, French laurels, which are the most to be envied of any, and to repose on a bed of American flowers, brightest of all the flowers that bloom! In the darkness which, though dispersed for a time, gradually returns to envelop him once more in its beloved shade, such a man, like Horace, keeps happy things for the present and puts care behind him till the morrow; such a man knows not the daily struggle and nightly labour; he does not live by lamp-light, but by the light of the sun. He lies down when the robin sings his evening song and wakes when the lark begins to sing; nothing disturbs the order of Nature for him; his day is day and his night is night; and, when his last day or final night comes, he has lived his life within its natural limits. I shall have gone through mine hurrying along on the brakeless engine of work. I shall not have sat down at any table belonging to those lengthy banquets where people stay till they become intoxicated; I shall have tasted from all sorts of cups; and the only ones I shall have drained to the dregs (for man's existence, however rapid, always has time for doing this) will have been the bitter cups!

At this time, in 1832, however, I had not yet become the being I now am. I was then a young man of twenty-nine, eager after pleasure, eager for love and for life, eager after everything, in fact, but hatred. It is a strange thing that I have never been able to hate on account of any personal wrong or injury. If I have harboured any antipathy in my heart, if I have shown, either in my words, or in my writings, any aggressive sentiment, it was against those people who set themselves against the growth of art, and who opposed progress in politics. If to-day, after twenty-five years have elapsed, I attack,

M. Viennet, M. Jay, M. Étienne, the whole of the Académie, in short, or, at any rate, the major portion of its members, it is not in the least because these gentlemen collectively signed petitions against me or, individually, prohibited my plays; it is because they hindered France from marching towards the supreme conquest of art, and founding a universal monarchy of the intellect. If, after thirty years, I bear a grudge against Louis-Philippe, it is not because he stopped my salary when I gave myself to literature, or because he demanded my resignation when I had a drama received at the Théâtre-Français; it is because this would-be citizen-king had a rooted aversion to new ideas, an instinctive distaste for all movements which tended to advance the human race. Now, how can you expect me, who am all for progress, to admit without question, on whatever side I meet them, death, or inaction, which is the likeness of death!

Already, in 1832, I began to find that, working for the theatre—I will not say did not occupy my time sufficiently, but—occupied my mind too much in one direction. I had, as I have mentioned, tried to write some short novels: *Laurette*, *Le Cocher de Cabriolet*, *La Rose rouge*. I have told how I had them printed, under the title *Nouvelles Contemporaines*, at my own expense, or, rather, at that of my poor mother, and that six copies were sold at 3 francs a copy; which left me 582 francs out of pocket. One of the six sold copies, or, rather, probably, one of the three or four hundred copies that were given away, fell into the hands of the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and he made up his mind that, poor as these stories were, the author who had written them could, by dint of working, make something as a novel-writer.

That editor was M. Buloz; who, under the reign of Louis-Philippe, had become a power in the State; now he still is a powerful influence in literature. Be it clearly understood, M. Buloz is not a power on account of his

personal literary abilities, but by the literary merits of others of whom he made free use. Hugo, Balzac, Soulié, de Musset and I had invented the facile style of literature ; and we have succeeded, whether ill or well, in making a reputation with that fluent style of writing.

M. Buloz had himself invented the boresome style of literature and, for good or for ill, made his fortune out of it, wearisome though it was. It is not in the least the case that, when M. Buloz takes it into his head to write, he is not as tiresome as, or even more so than, Monsieur So and So ; but it is not enough merely to write in order to produce real literature. M. Nisard explained once, with difficulty, laboriously and wearisomely, what ease of style in literature was. We will ourselves try to tell, in as amusing a way as we can, what the laboured style of literature is. True, we could put a reference here and say, " See M. Désiré Nisard or M. Philarète Chasles " ; but we know our readers would rather believe us than go and look for themselves. MM. Désiré Nisard and Philarète Chasles will be dealt with in their own turn. Let us now turn our attention to M. Buloz.

M. Buloz, first a compositor, then a foreman in a printing house, was, in 1830, a man between thirty-four or five years of age, of pale complexion, with a thin beard, eyes that did not match properly, features of no particular character and yellowish, sparsely grown hair ; as regards temperament, he was taciturn and almost gloomy, disinclined to speak, because of an increasing deafness, cross-grained on his good days, brutal on his bad ones, and, at all times, doggedly obstinate. I knew him through Bixio and Bocage. Both were intimate with him at that time.[1] M. Buloz has since been to them, as he has been to everybody, faithless in friendship when not downright ungrateful for service done him. I do not know how he gets on with

[1] M. Buloz's ambition was to have a review. I had the good fortune to help him in this ambition ; I think I have previously said how ; may I be excused if I repeat myself.

Bixio now; but I believe he is very horrid to Bocage. We were not rich in those days; we had our meals in a little restaurant in the rue de Tournon, adjoining the *hotel de l'Empereur Joseph II.*, where, I can assure you, they served very bad dinners at six sous the plateful.

M. Ribing de Leuven had a newspaper, which sold very badly, a *journal de luxe*, and wealthy people took up the fad and ruined themselves over it; it was called *Le Journal des Voyages*. Adolphe and I persuaded M. de Leuven to sell this paper to Buloz.

Buloz, Bocage, Bonnaire and, I believe, even Bixio, collected some funds and became proprietors of the above-mentioned paper, which took the title of *La Revue des Deux Mondes*. This occurred in 1830 or 1831. We all set to work with our best efforts on this newspaper, which we looked upon as a child belonging to all of us and loved with a paternal affection. The first milk I gave it to feed on was a *Voyage en Vendée*, which is partly to be found in these Memoirs. Then, this is what happened to me: I have told how profoundly ignorant I was in history and of my great desire to study it. I heard a great deal of talk about the Duc de Bourgoyne and I read the *Histoire des ducs de Bourgoyne*, by Barante. For the first time, a French historian let himself have free play in picturesque writing of history and in simplicity in the telling of legends.

The work begun by the romances of Sir Walter Scott had by now matured in my mind. I did not yet feel strong enough to write a long novel; but there was then a kind of literature being produced which kept a middle course between the novel and the drama, which had some of the influence of the one and much of the arresting qualities of the other, wherein dialogue alternated with narrative; this type of literature was termed "*Scènes historiques.*"

With my inclinations already biased towards the theatre, I set myself to dissect, to relate and to put these historical scenes into dialogues from the *Histoire des ducs de Bourgoyne*. They were taken from one of the

most dramatic periods of France, the reign of Charles VI.; they provided me with the dishevelled personage of the mad king, with the poetic figure of Odette, the imperious and licentious character of Isabel of Bavaria, the careless one of Louis d'Orléans, the terrible character of John of Burgundy, the pale and romantic one of Charles VII.; they gave me l'Ile-Adam and his sword, Tanneguy-Duchatel and his axe, the Sire de Giac and his horse, the Chevalier de Bois-Bourdon and his gold doublet and Perinet-Leclerc and his keys. But they offered me still more; I, who was already a creator of scenes, they provided with a well-known stage upon which to plan my characters, since the events all took place in the neighbourhood of Paris or in Paris itself. I began to compose my book, driving it before me as a labourer urges forward his plough, without knowing exactly what is going to happen. The result was *Isabeau de Bavière.*

As fast as I finished these scenes, I took them to Buloz, who carried them to the printing office, and printed them, and, every fortnight, the subscribers read them.

From that time there sprang up in my work my two chief qualities, those which will give a value to my books and to my theatrical works in the future; dialogue, which is the groundwork of drama; and the gift of narrative, which is the foundation of romance. These qualifications—you know how frankly and unguardedly I talk of myself—I have in a superior degree. At that period, I had not yet discovered two other qualities in myself, none the less important, which are derived from one another—gaiety and a lively imagination People are lighthearted because they are in good health, because they have a good digestion, because they have no reason for sadness. That is the cheerfulness of most people. But with me gaiety of heart is persistent, not the lightheartedness which shines through grief—all sorrow, on the contrary, finds me either full of compassion for others, or profoundly depressed with myself—but which shines through all

the worries, material vexations and even lesser dangers of life. One has a lively imagination because one is light-hearted; but this imagination often evaporates like the flame of spirits or the foam on champagne. A merry man, spirited and animated of speech, is, at times, dull and morose when alone in front of his paper with pen in hand. Now work, on the contrary, excites me; directly I have a pen in my hand, reaction sets in; my most freakish fancies have often sprung out of my dullest days, like fiery lightnings out of a storm. But, as I have said, at this period of my youth, I did not recognise in myself either this imagination or this lightness of spirit.

One day, I introduced Lassailly to Oudard. He wanted help, I think. My letter, instead of being dismal, was merry, but with a gaiety that was importunate and full of sympathy. Lassailly read the letter, which he was to take in person, and, turning towards me, he said with a stupefied air—

"Well! this is comical!"

"What?"

"Why, you possess wit!"

"Why should I not? Are you envious?"

"Ah! you are probably the first man of five foot nine who has ever been witty!"

I remembered this saying more than once whilst creating Porthos, it was more pregnant than it seemed at the first utterance. My brevet for wittiness was, then, bestowed on me by Lassailly, a good fellow, who was not lacking in a certain sort of merit, but who, as regards wit, was as badly equipped by nature as the fox whose tail was cut off was with cunning. Besides, at that period I should have recognised the marvellous quality of mirthfulness which I had latent within my soul, fearfully hidden from all eyes. Then, the only mirth permissible was satanic, the mirth of Mephistopheles or of Manfred. Goethe and Byron were the two great sneerers of the century. In common with others I had put a mask on my face. Witness my

portrait sketches of that period: there is one of Devéria, written in 1831, which, with a few alterations, could perfectly stand for the portrait of Antony. This mask, however, was gradually to fall and to leave my real face to be disclosed in the *Impressions de Voyages*. But, I repeat, in 1832 I was still looked upon as a Manfred and a Childe Harold. But, when one is of an impressionable temperament, this kind of whim only takes one during a headstrong period; and, the times themselves, being gloomy and terrible, were instrumental to the success both of my début as a democratic poet and also as a romance writer.

CHAPTER V

Success of my *Scènes historiques*—Clovis and Hlodewig (Chlodgwig)—I wish to apply myself seriously to the study of the history of France—The Abbé Gauthier and M. de Moyencourt—Cordelier-Delanoue reveals to me Augustin Thierry and Chateaubriand—New aspects of history—*Gaule et France*—A drama in collaboration with Horace Vernet and Auguste Lafontaine

MY *Scènes historiques sur le règne de Charles VI.* were my first successful things in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. We shall presently see the result which this proved success had for me. That success decided me to write a series of romances which should extend from the reign of Charles VI. to our own day. My first desire is always limitless; my first inspiration even to achieve the impossible. Only when I become infatuated, half through pride and half through love of my art, do I achieve the impossible. How?—I will try to tell you, although I do not understand it very thoroughly myself: by working as nobody else works, cutting off all the extraneous details of life and doing without sleep. When once ambition has taken shape in my thoughts my whole mind is set to the putting of it into execution. Having discovered a vein of gold in the well of the beginning of the fifteenth century, in which I had been digging, I never doubted, so great was my confidence in myself, that at each fresh well I dug in a century nearer our own times, if I did not find a vein of gold I should at least find one of platinum or silver. I put the silver last because, at this period, platinum still held an intermediary value between silver and gold. Nevertheless, one thing made me uneasy: from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, from Charles

VI. to Napoleon, I should teach history to the public whilst learning it myself—but who would teach it me from Clovis to Charles VI. ? May I be forgiven for saying *Clovis*. I called it so then, I still call it so now, but, from 1833 to 1840, I spoke of *Hlodewig* (*Chlodgwig*). True, no one understood whom I meant ; that is why I returned to calling it *Clovis*—like the rest of the world.

I decided to write a few pages of introduction to my novel, *Isabeau de Bavière*, which was intended to open the series of my historical novels. You shall judge of my ignorance and appreciate my innocence, for I am going to tell you something that certainly no one else would admit. To learn the history of France, of which I did not know a word in 1831 (except that connected with Henri III.), and which, in common with general opinion, I held to be the most wearisome history in the whole world, I bought the *Histoire de France*, at the request of, and in response to, the Abbé Gauthier, since revised and corrected by M. de Moyencourt. So I bravely set to work to study the history of France, copying out such notes as the following as seriously as possible, which summed up a whole chapter poetically :

" Memoires d'Alex. Dumas

En l'an quatre cent vingt, Pharamond, premier roi,
Est connu seulement par la salique loi.

***

Clodion, second roi, nommé le Chevelu,
Au fier Aétius cède, deux fois vaincu.

***

Francs, Bourguignons et Goths triomphent d'Attila.
Chilpéric fut chassé, mais on le rappela.

***

Clovis, à Tolbiac, fit vœu d'être chrétien ;
Il défait Gondebaud, tue Alaric, arien ;
Entre ses quatre fils partage ses États,
Source d'atrocités, de guerres, d'attentats.

***

Childebert, en cinq cent, eut Paris en partage ;
Les Bourguignons, les Goths éprouvent son courage."

And this went on up to Louis-Philippe, of whom this is the distich—

> " Philippe d'Orléans, tiré de son palais,
> Succède à Charles-Dix, par le choix des Français."

There was in these quatrains and distichs, instructive though they were, one singular feature which, indeed, distressed me somewhat : amongst all these verses, there were only two to be found which were feminine. There must verily be a reason for that : as the *History of France* was specially intended for schools, it was necessary, doubtless, to bring before the notice of school children as few evil ideas as possible, that might even indirectly remind them of a *genus* which brought destruction upon the human race. I apparently took my notes with desperate seriousness, and deemed that I already knew enough history to teach it to others when, by good fortune, Delanoue came to my study. Quick as I had been in hiding my Abbé Gauthier, revised by M. de Moyencourt, Delanoue saw the action.

" What are you reading there ? " he asked.

" Nothing."

" Nothing ? Why you had a book in your hand ! "

" Oh ! a book . . . yes."

No doubt he imagined it was some obscene book which I wished to conceal from him. He insisted in such a manner that it was impossible to resist him.

" There," I said to him, rather humiliated at being surprised reading such an elementary subject as a history of France.

" Oh ! Abbé Gauthier's history . . . well, upon my word ! " And, without needing to cast a glance at the book, he repeated—

> " Neuf cent quatre vingt-sept voir Capet sur le trône.
> Ses fils ont huit cents ans conservé la couronne ! "

" Oh, you know it by heart ? "

"It is the companion to *Racine's grecques*—

"'O, se doit compter pom septante;
'Οδελός, la broche tournante.'"

Delanoue assumed in my eyes fabulous proportions of learnedness.

"What! do you not know the Abbé Gauthier's *Histoire de France* and the *Jardin des Racines grecques*, by M. Lancelot?"

"I know nothing, my dear fellow!"

"It must make you laugh."

"Not very much."

"Then why do you read it?"

"Because I want to get exact details about the early centuries of our history."

"And you are looking for them in the Abbé Gauthier?"

"As you see."

"Ah! You are funny! Did you get your details for *Henri III.* from this?—

"'Henri-Trois, de Bologne, en France est ramené,
Redoute les ligueurs, et meurt assassine!'"

"No, from l'Estoile, Brantôme, d'Aubigné, and the *Confession de Sancy*; but I did not know there was anything like that about Mérovée or Clovis."

"In the first place, they are not called Mérovée and Clovis now."

"What are they called, then?"

"Méro-wig and Hlode-wig; which mean *the eminent warrior* and *the celebrated warrior*."

"Where did you see that?"

"*Parbleu!* in the *Lettres sur l'histoire de France* by Augustin Thierry."

"The *Lettres sur l'histoire de France*, by Augustin Thierry?"

"Yes."

"Where can it be got?"

"Anywhere."

"What does it cost?"

"Perhaps 10 or 12 francs, I am not sure exactly how much."

"Will you be so good as to buy it for me and have it sent in as soon as you leave me?"

"Nothing could be simpler."

"Do you know any other books on this period?"

"There is Chateaubriand's *Études historiques* and the original sources of information."

"Who are these?"

"The authors of the Decline, Jornandès, Zozimus, Sidonius Apollinaris, Gregory of Tours."

"Have you read all those authors?"

"Yes, partly."

"Did the Abbé Gauthier not read them?"

"In the first case he could not have read Augustin Thierry, who has written since his death. As to Chateaubriand, he was his contemporary, and historians never read contemporary historians; finally, as regards Jornandès, Zozimus, Sidonius Apollinaris and Gregory of Tours, I suspect the Abbé Gauthier of never having even known of their existence."

"But whence, then, did he get his history?"

"From the Abbé Gauthier's who wrote the same sort of histories before him."

"Will you also buy me Chateaubriand at the same time as Thierry?"

"Certainly."

"See; here is the money . . . I shall not see you again."

"No; but you want your Augustin Thierry and Chateaubriand?"

"I confess I do."

"You shall have them in a quarter of an hour's time."

And I had them a quarter of an hour later.

I opened one of the books haphazard. . . . I had alighted on Augustin Thierry. I read—I am mistaken, I did not read,

I devoured—that marvellous work on the early kings by the author of the *Conquête des Normands*; then the sort of historical tableaux entitled *Récits Mérovingiens*. Then, without needing to open Chateaubriand, all the ghosts of those kings, standing on the threshold of monarchy, appeared before me, from the moment when they were made visible to the eyes of the learned chronicler—from Clodio, *whose scouts reported that Gaul is the noblest of countries, full of all kinds of wealth, and planted with forests of fruit trees*, who was the first to wield the Frankish rule over the Gauls, to the great and religious-minded Karl, *rising from table filled with a great fear, standing for a long time by a window which looked to the east, with arms crossed, weeping without stanching his tears*, because he saw on the horizon the Norman vessels. I saw, in fact, visions which I had never suspected hitherto, a whole living world of people of twelve centuries ago, in the dark and deep abysses of the past. I remained spell-bound. Until that moment I had believed Clovis and Charlemagne were the ancestors of Louis XIV.; but here, under the pen of Augustin Thierry, a new kind of geography was revealed, each race flowed by separately, following its own particular channel through the ages: Gauls, as vast as a lake, Romans, as noble as a river, Franks, as terrible as a flood, Huns, Burgundians, West-Goths as devouring and rapid as torrents. Something equivalent to what happened in me at General Foy's repeated itself. I perceived that, during the nine years which had rolled by, I had learnt nothing or next to nothing; I remembered my conversation with Lassagne; I understood that there was more to see in the past than in the future; I was ashamed of my ignorance, and I pressed my head convulsively between my hands. Why, then, did not those who knew produce their knowledge? Oh! I did not know at that period with what fatherly goodness God treats men; how he makes some into miners who extract gold and diamonds from the earth, of others, the

goldsmiths who cut and mount them. I did not know that God had made Augustin Thierry a miner and me a goldsmith.

I was seven or eight days hesitating before the enormous task which I had to accomplish ; then, during that halting time, my courage returned to me and I bravely set to work, forgetting everything for the sake of the study of history. It was during this period that I wrote *Térésa* and the piece of which I am about to speak. Horace Vernet had sent a large picture from Rome depicting *Édith aux longs cheveux cherchant le corps d'Harold sur le champ de bataille d'Hastings.* It was a picture belonging to the category that Vernet laughingly styled his grand manner. It was singularly fascinating to me on account of the heroine's name, not because of the subject. I was seized with the whim to write a drama with the title *Édith aux longs cheveux.* One could only write in verse a drama with so poetical a title. *Charles VII.* had somewhat familiarised me with what is still called at the Academy the language of the gods. How was all this which I saw but imperfectly, and which it was an absolute necessity I should study, to remain in my poor brain without its bursting ? And be careful to notice that I was as yet only brooding over the earliest races. How was I to disentangle the surroundings of Charlemagne and his son and to represent the interests and types of the Frankish race ? How was I to pick out the Eudes and Roberts, the National Kings who sprang up and reigned over the conquered land which was to produce its Camilles and Pélages ? It was staggering to know nothing at thirty of what other men knew when they were twelve. I had studied the theatre ; I knew enough about it to be satisfied on that head. I must, then, study history as I had studied the theatre, and I believed that history was a barrier put in my path. Who was there to tell me that there would be a fresh course of study to make, longer, drier and more arduous than the preceding one ? The

study of the theatre had taken me five or six years. How much time was the study of history going to take me? Alas! I should have to study it for the rest of my life! If I had studied at the age of other people, I should have had nothing else to do but produce! I had as yet only the title to my drama. It need hardly be said that all I knew about the battle of Hastings was that which I had read in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. So I purposed to compose something after the style of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and not a historical drama. Accordingly, I read by chance a romance by Auguste Lafontaine—I would indeed like to tell you which but I have forgotten—all I remember is that the heroine's name was Jacobine. However, if you wish to remove all doubts about the matter, my friend Madame Cardinal, rue des Canettes, will tell you. She knows her Auguste Lafontaine by heart. Anyhow, Jacobine is made to take a narcotic and is put to sleep so that she may pass for dead, and, thanks to this supposed death, which releases her from the trammels of the earth, she can marry her lover. It is a little like *Romeo and Juliet*; but what is there on this earth here below which does not resemble some other idea, more or less? You will notice that I had already had this tiresome drama in my head for a very long time; for I had suggested it to Harel in the month of August 1830, instead of *Napoléon*, which I strongly disliked doing. We have seen how Harel fought and overcame my resistance. As for *Édith aux longs cheveux*, he had refused it outright, and you will see directly that he was not ill advised in doing so.

CHAPTER VI

Édith aux longs cheveux—Catherine Howard

HERE is the story of *Édith aux longs cheveux*; you will meet her again under another name, clad in another garb and, instead of moving along in five acts, dragging behind her a tail of eight scenes.

A young girl who has been deserted lives in a sort of Eden surrounded by green shade, singing birds and flowers; a river flows, encroaching on one corner of her garden, as on the Arno or the Canal de la Brenta, and beautiful young people pass by on it who make her dream of love, and beautiful noblemen who make her dream ambitious dreams.

One of these noblemen notices her, and stops before the graceful apparition, penetrates into what he believes is a fairy palace and finds a young maiden, who looks as though she were the sister of the birds and the flowers which surround her; like them, she sings; like them, she is white and rosy and sweet scented. He falls in love with Edith. But Edith cares for nothing but the court and balls and fêtes and royal pomp. Ethelwood is the king's favourite; and, meantime, she allows herself to be loved by Ethelwood. Edith is one of those women who are as white as marble and as cold at heart as marble; she is like the statue of an ancient courtesan, dug up from the ruins of Pompeii, which is touched to life by the daylight and sunshine. She is alive, but that is all; it is useless to expect love from her. It is very seldom I created such characters in my books or dramas as this, but I had an example before me at the time. That example lured me on; there is

always a little of the outside material world in the ideal inner world of the artist. She tells Ethelwood that she loves him, but she does not; for, behind Ethelwood, she looks towards the king. The king has also seen her; it is fated that certain women cannot be seen without being loved. The king sees Edith and loves her. But who is she and how is she to be approached? The king knows nothing about it; he needs ministers to help him to his love, as he needs them in his kingdom; and if Ethelwood helps him to support half his power, Ethelwood will also help him to carry the weight of his love. That which Ethelwood dreaded happens: the king falls in love with the same woman that he does. This woman is his very life; he wishes to keep her from the king at no matter what price. On the following day he has to visit Edith with the king. He has the night before him and on his side—night, the faithful ally of lovers, we must also add the capricious friend, for she betrays almost as often as she serves! He sets off; in two hours' time he is with Edith. He presses into her hand a flask filled with the potent drug which only exists on the stage and is only to be found among Shakespeare's alchemists. When the lover sees her, beautiful and young and almost loving for the first time—for she is thinking of the king, whilst fondling Ethelwood—he hesitates even to put this masterpiece of creation to sleep. Sleep, said the ancients, is brother to Death. But suppose the sister be jealous of the brother and pluck the soul of that beautiful child, like a flower from a tomb, during her sleep! A ballad Edith sings about a vassal espoused by a king decides him; the narcotic is poured into the maiden's glass; she has hardly drunk it before a deadly stupor spreads over her; she feels herself growing numb; she cries out, calls, instinctively pushes Ethelwood from her and falls asleep in despair thinking she is dying. He returns to the palace; next day, when he returned with the king they find Edith dead. She is laid in a vault; the king and Ethelwood

go down into it and the king kneels. Ethelwood remains standing with his hand on the girl's heart, fearing that life has disappeared and is turned into death. He feels a slight throbbing in her veins and thinks the icy marble is gradually becoming warmer. What will happen if Edith wakes? He makes a pretext of the king's grief and drags him away, just as Edith's heart is beginning to flutter beneath his hand. Edith is left alone and wakes like Juliet; but, when Juliet awakens, she finds Romeo waiting for her. Edith is alone with the dead, with all the terrors and superstitions of the young girl: she cries and calls and shakes the door of the vault; it opens and Ethelwood appears. For the first time she flings herself into his arms with the effusion of gratitude. It is not a king bringing her a crown, but something much greater and more precious, a far more providential gift: a saviour who brings her life. For some moments she loves him with the whole strength of the life which she thought she had lost. Her expression is so open and true and spontaneous that she deceives the poor lover. He thinks he is beloved and tells her everything. The king has seen her and is in love with her. Then, for the benefit of the audience only, under the guise of the loving girl, one of the characteristics of the ambitious woman begins to reveal itself. Ethelwood confesses his ruse to Edith: he tells her how he made her take a drug to put her to sleep; he discloses to her what he had hidden from her until now, that he is one of the highest nobles in the State; but this no longer satisfies Edith! He tells her that, during her sleep, the king came down into her vault, and prayed on his knees by the side of the adored body which he took for a corpse; and that he, Ethelwood, a prey to the anguish of despair, awaited, dagger in hand, for the first movement of Edith and the first sigh from the king to stab the latter.

In the midst of the poor fool's story, Edith follows her own train of thought only. The king loves her!

Why not be the king's wife rather than that of the king's favourite ? . . . Did not the king put his ring of betrothal on her finger ? . . . A ring—it is a crown in miniature ! Meantime, Edith must be got out of the tomb, which weighs heavily on her, and take advantage of the night to reach Ethelwood's château. Ethelwood will go and explore the surroundings and then, if the road be deserted, he will return and fetch Edith. Edith is left alone for a moment and makes use of the time to search for traces of the king's footsteps on the damp flagstones, and the marks of his hand on the cold marble. In that brief moment she discloses her heart and the abyss of ambition which has swallowed up all her love.

Ethelwood returns to fetch her. It is almost with regret that she leaves the vault where a king has kissed her brow and passed a ring on her finger. The next act is in the count's château. Edith seems happy. Ethelwood is happy. The arrival of the king is announced. What has he to do at the count's home ? Edith would know why ; obliged to hide herself from being seen by the king, she does it in such a way as not to lose a word he says to the count.

The king is profoundly sad. Like all wounded hearts, he seeks for conflict ; the war with France affords a diversion for his grief ; he will go on the Continent. But he wants a firm and trustworthy regent for his State during his absence ; he has thought of Ethelwood, who shall be the regent, and, to reward him for his devotion, and, still more, to attach him to the interests of the kingdom, sure as he is of his loyalty, he will give him his sister in marriage.

Ethelwood tries to refuse this twofold honour ; he objects that Princess Eleanor—I think she was called Eleanor ; I am not very certain, but the name of the princess does not affect the matter : in theatrical slang the princess would be called la princesse *Bouche Trou* (*i.e.* a stop-gap princess)—the Princess Eleanor does not love him. Ethelwood is mistaken, the princess does love him. He

refuses everything. This refusal at first surprises, then annoys, the king. . . . A quarrel springs up between subject and king. The subject puts his hand on his sword hilt. Henceforth, he will incur confiscation, degradation, death on the scaffold; he will become poor, renounce his rank, will brave death, but he will marry no other woman than Edith. The king goes away, forbidding him to follow: but Ethelwood is the king's host; he must conduct him to his château gates; he must hold his stirrup and give his knee for the king to mount his horse. Scarcely has the king gone out and the count disappeared behind him, than a thick tapestry is raised and Edith enters on the scene. She has seen nothing save that the king is young and beautiful; heard nothing but that he loves her. Ethelwood's devotion, his refusal to marry the king's sister, the danger he is incurring, all glide over her heart like a breath on a mirror. She goes to the window. Ethelwood is on his knees holding the king's stirrup. In the office which, where nobility of spirit is present, is regarded as an honour, Edith sees nothing but shame; and, looking at the king, covered with gold and precious stones, surrounded with the homage of a people, as in a purple mantle, grown great by the lowliness of all who are around him, she lets fall the whisper, "If only I could be queen! . . ." At this moment Ethelwood returns. He makes up his mind, Edith shall know him as he is. He asks for pen, paper and ink. He is going to write his will.

"Are you going to die then?" asks Edith.

"No; but I am going to make you a return for all you have done for me. I only poured you out half the liquid contained in the flask; the rest was for myself, in case it had turned out to be a poison instead of a narcotic."

"Well?"

"I have drunk the rest of that liquid from the flask."

Edith grows pale; she begins to understand. The parchment upon which Ethelwood has rapidly traced a

few lines will tell to every one that the count has taken refuge from the king's anger in death. As Edith lay in her grave, Ethelwood will be laid in his; and, as he watched over her, she, in her turn, shall watch by him; as he had the key of death, she shall have the key of life. Edith fights against this idea; she measures her own weakness, urges her ambition, but too late: Ethelwood, when he left the king, had taken the narcotic. He totters, pales, falls into Edith's arms as he puts the key of the vault into her hand saying—

"Till to-morrow!"

Next day, instead of opening the gates of life to her lover, Edith takes the king her betrothal ring. The king at first thinks she is the ghost of the woman whom he loved; then, by degrees, he is satisfied; he joyously touches the warm and living hand which he had touched when it was dead and cold; he renews to the Edith full of life the offers he had made to the Edith asleep in the tomb. The young girl turns giddy and needs to recollect all her promised ambitions. The key of the vault where her lover lies burns like red-hot iron. She goes to the window and asks if the river which flows at the foot of the palace is very deep.

"It is a gulf which swallows up all that is thrown into it."

Edith turns her head aside, and with a smothered cry lets the key fall into it, saying—

"Que pour l'éternité.
L'abime l'engloutisse, ou le courant l'entraîne!

LE ROI.
Que faites-vous, Édith?

ÉDITH.
Moi, rien . . . je me fais reine!"

I had pondered over this subject for two years, and had worked for something like three to four months at the plan of this fine work. I was reasonably well satisfied with it, not because of its merit, but on account of the trouble it had cost me: in other words, I believed I had

achieved a masterpiece. So, for the first time in my life—and also for the last—I invited two or three friends to come to hear the reading of it which I had to give before the Théâtre-Français. I had a splendid audience. My delusion lasted to the end of the first act; but I must say it went no further. At the end of that act, I already felt that my *chef d'œuvre* had not caught on with the public. By the second act, it was still colder. By the third, it was frigid! One of the greatest punishments that can be imposed on an author, in expiation of his plays, is to read before a committee that has come with benevolent intentions, and to feel these intentions little by little fading away, turning yellow, falling at the breath of boredom, as autumn leaves fall under the killing winds of winter. Ah! what would one not give, at such a moment, not to have to go on to the finish, but to roll up one's manuscript, make one's bow and depart! But no such fate! In spite of the service the author would render to his audience, he is condemned to read and the audience to hear. He must go to the very end! He must descend the staircase of this tomb step by step, colder than the staircase of death itself! This was, I repeat, the first time the thing had happened to me; a just punishment for my pride. I rose immediately after the last hemistich and went out, leaving *Édith aux longs cheveux* on the committee table. I felt that, this time, it was not a narcotic she had taken, like Juliet, but a fine, good poison she had swallowed, like Romeo. However, I had not the courage to go away without an answer. So I waited for it in the manager's office. It was Mademoiselle Mars herself who brought it me. Poor Mademoiselle Mars! She wore a funereal expression; one would have said that she had returned from Ethelwood's obsequies, after having the day before been at those of Edith. She beat about the bush in all sorts of ways to break it to me that the committee did not think my play was suitable for acting. According to her, the play was only half written.

"What became of Edith after she had flung the key into the abyss? What became of Ethelwood, enclosed in the vault? What became of the king's sister, who was enamoured of this living dead man? Was it possible that Providence could look on at such a crime without interfering? That divine justice could hear of such a grievance and find no true bill? There must be a sequel to be joined to such a beginning, a second part to attach to this first. Was there no way of turning the sister of the king to account? Could she not represent faithfulness, as Edith represented ingratitude? Could she not descend into the vault to see her dead lover as the king had done to see his dead fiancée? Could not that happen to the sister which had nearly happened in the king's case and Ethelwood? . . ."

I took hold of Mademoiselle Mars's hand.

"The play is saved," I said to her; "it shall be called *Catherine Howard*. Thanks to you, I perceive the ending. . . . Where are my friends that I may announce the good news to them?"

But my friends were far away. They found a disused door by which they could make sure of fleeing without meeting me. Next day I received a letter from the secretary of the Comédie-Française, which invited me to take away the manuscript. "Fling it into the fire!" I replied. I do not know whether he obeyed my instructions; but I know I never saw it again and the only verses which I remember are the two and a half I have quoted—

"On les immola tous, sire :—ils étaient trois mille!"

And that was how the beautiful *Édith aux longs cheveux* was buried.

existe will tell in due order and place how there came into much nce her sister, *Catherine Howard*, who was not worth age, in nore than she was, and who died in the flower of her 'he year of grace 1834.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

An invasion of cholera—Aspect of Paris—Medicine and the scourge—Proclamation of the Prefect of Police—The supposed poisoners — Harel's newspaper paragraph — Mademoiselle Dupont—Eugène Durieu and Anicet Bourgeois—Catherine (not Howard) and the cholera—First performance of *Mari de la veuve*—A horoscope which did not come true

MEANTIME, France had been anxiously following the progress of cholera for some time past. Starting from India, it had taken the route of the great magnetic currents, had crossed Persia, reached St. Petersburg and stopped at London. The Channel alone separated it from us. But what is the distance between Dover and Calais to a giant who has just done three thousand leagues? So it crossed the Channel at a single stride. I remember the day when it struck its first blow: the sky was sapphire blue; the sun very powerful. All nature was being born again, with its beautiful green robe and the colours of youth and of health on its cheeks. The Tuileries was studded with women as a greensward is with flowers; revolutionary risings had died down for some time, leaving society a little peace and permitting spectators to venture out to the theatres. Suddenly, a terrible cry went forth, uttered in a voice like those mentioned in the Bible which thrill through the atmosphere, hurling maledictions on the earth from the skies: "The cholera is in Paris!" They added: "A man has just

died in the rue Chauchat; he was literally struck down dead!" It was exactly as though a veil of crape was stretched between the blue sky and the bright sun and Paris. People rushed out into the streets and fled to their homes, shouting: "The cholera! the cholera!" as, seventeen years before, they had shouted: "The Cossacks!" But, no matter how well they closed their doors and windows, the terrible demon of Asia slipped in through the chinks of the shutters and through the key-holes of the doors. Then people attempted to fight it. Science came forward and tried to wrestle with it at close quarters. It touched it with its finger-tips, and science was floored. Science rose stunned but not vanquished; and began to study the disease. Sometimes, people died in three hours' time; at others, in even less time still. The sick man, or, rather, the condemned, suddenly felt a slight shivering: then came the first stage of cold, then cramp, then the terrible and ceaseless dysentery; next the circulation was stopped by the thickening of the blood; the capillaries were altered; the sick man became black and died. But none of these stages was positively fixed; they might follow or precede or intermingle with one another; each separate constitution brought its own variety of the malady. Further, these were but symptoms; people died with symptoms as of some unknown disease. The corpse was visible, but the assassin invisible! It struck and the blow was seen, but it was useless to search for the dagger. People were doctored by guesswork; as a man surprised by a thief in the night strikes out into the gloom by chance, hoping to hit the thief, so science wielded its sword in the darkness. In Russia, they treated cholera with ice. The attacks there presented the symptoms of typhoid. Opinion was divided on this point. Some administered tonics, that is to say, punch, warm wine, Bordeaux and Madeira. Others, thinking only of the abdominal pains, treated them with both the systems in vogue at that period, either by the physiological system of

Broussais, which consisted in bleeding the sick and putting leeches on the stomach and abdomen—a treatment which attempted to attack the inflammatory part of the disease—or by opiates, calmatives and soothing medicines, like opium, belladonna and hellebore—this was to deal with the pain more than the disease. Others, again, tried warmth, hot-air baths, rubbing, burning iron. When the cold stage was attacked in time, and by energetic reaction they succeeded in overcoming the cold, the patient was generally saved. All the same, they only saved about one out of every ten! This was the reverse of the tithe.

The scourge struck the poorer classes by preference, but it did not spare the rich. The hospitals were crowded with terrible rapidity. A man would fall ill in his home; two neighbours put him on a stretcher and carried him to the nearest hospital. The sick man often died before he got there, and one, if not both, of the carriers would take his place upon the stretcher. A ring of frightened faces would form round the dead, and a cry would sound from the crowd. A man with one of his hands to his chest and the other to his body would writhe like an epileptic, fall to the ground, roll on the pavement, turn blue and expire. The crowd would disperse terrified, lifting hands to heaven, turning their heads behind them and flying for the sake of flight, for the danger was everywhere; it did not understand the distinctions the doctors made between the three words: epidemic, endemic and contagious.

The doctors were heroic! Never general on the bloodiest field of battle ran dangers equal to those to which the man of science exposed himself in the midst of the hospitals or as he went from bed to bed in the town. The Sisters of Charity were saints and often martyrs. The strangest rumours got abroad, springing from one knows not where, and repeated by the people with curses and menaces. They said that it was the fault of the Government, which, to get rid of the surplus population filling up Paris, caused poison to be thrown into the fountains

and into the casks of the wine merchants. Paris seemed to be seized with madness ; those even whose offices made it a duty to reassure others were afraid. On 2 April, the Prefect of Police, M. Gisquet, addressed the following circular to the Police Commissaries :—

" MONSIEUR LE COMMISSAIRE,—The appearance of the cholera-germ in the capital, the source of active anxiety and of real sorrow for all good citizens, has given the perpetual enemies of order a fresh opportunity for spreading infamous calumnies against the Government throughout the population ; people have dared to say that the cholera is nothing short of poisoning effected by the agents of those in authority in order to decrease the population and to turn aside the general attention from political questions.

" *I am informed that, to give credit to these atrocious conjectures, certain wretches have conceived the project of going through the public-houses and butchers' shops with bottles and packets of poison, either to throw into the fountains or wine casks or on to the meat, or simply to seem to do so and then get arrested in the very act by accomplices, who, after having made out that they were attached to the police, will countenance their escape, and, finally, set everything at work to demonstrate the reality of the odious accusation directed against authority.*

" I need only point out such designs to you, monsieur, to make you feel the necessity of redoubling your vigilance over the establishment of dealers in liquids and butchers' shops, and to urge you to warn the inhabitants against attempts which they have a personal and powerful interest in preventing. If such audacious attempts are carried out, I need hardly tell you how important it will be to seize the culprits and to place them in the hands of justice. It is a task in which you will be seconded by all friends of order and by all respectable people.—Receive, etc.

" GISQUET "

An hour after the appearance of such a circular, the Prefect of Police ought to have been prosecuted. But nothing was done. M. Gisquet answered a blunder by a libel. It was no longer the agents of the Government who

poisoned the fountains and wine casks to reduce the population and turn attention away from political affairs, it was the Republicans who threw bottles of poison over the butchers' stalls to depopulate the Government of Louis-Philippe! One could understand the first accusation, which sprang out of ignorance; but the second! which came from authority and from such a quarter! a quarter which ought to be the best informed on such affairs as these! The people only asked not to have to believe in the presence of the plague: that invisible enemy, which struck from the heart of the clouds, irritated the people by its invisibility. They refused to believe that one could die of an atmospheric poison, from so pure a sky and so radiant a sun. A material, visible, palpable cause would do its business much more effectually — at all events, revenge could be taken on a tangible cause. Placards containing nearly the same accusations were pasted up. The same day crowds collected round these placards and then they took themselves off to the barriers. Poor unfortunate wretches were knocked down by sticks, assassinated by knife-thrusts, torn by the nails of women and the teeth of dogs. A man would be pointed at with a finger—pursued, attacked and killed! I saw one of these terrible executions from a distance. The crowd moved towards the barrier: one could count the heads by the thousand, each one a wave of that angry ocean; a great number of butcher-boys with their aprons spotted with blood were mixed up in that frightful sea, each apron among all those waves like a crest of foam. Paris threatened to become worse than a great charnel-house: it threatened to become a vast slaughter-house. The prefect was obliged to retract and to recognise that an assassin, a murderer, a poisoner who escaped all capture, had broken loose, and was hiding himself in Paris. That assassin, murderer and poisoner was the cholera!

Oh! who ever saw Paris at that time would forget it, with its implacable blue sky, its mocking sun, its de-

serted walks, its solitary boulevards, its streets strewn with hearses and haunted by phantoms? Places of public entertainment looked like immense tombs. Harel put the following paragraph in the newspapers during the performances of *Dix ans de la vie d'une femme* : —

"It has been noticed with surprise that theatres are the only public places where, whatever the number of spectators, no case of cholera had yet appeared. We present this INCONTESTABLE fact for scientific investigation."

Poor Harel! He still had his wits about him, when nobody else had any left or even dreamt of such a thing! It was the Terror of 1793 on a grand scale. In 1793, the worst days counted their thirty or thirty-five victims. Now, the newspapers admitted to between seven and eight hundred deaths per day! It was a strange thing! But other diseases seemed to have disappeared; they were stayed from sheer stupefaction; death had no longer any but the one way of striking. One left a friend at night, shook his hand, saying, "*Au revoir*!" and, th next day, a voice would come from one knew not where, out of chaos, would whisper in one's ear—

"You knew such and such a person?"

"Yes . . . Well?"

"He is dead!"

One had said *au revoir*; it was *adieu* one ought to have said instead.

Soon, there was a shortness of coffins: in that terrible *steeplechase* between death and the coffin-makers, the latter were outdistanced. They wrapped the bodies in tapestries; they rumbled along ten, fifteen, twenty, to the church at once. Relatives followed the common carts or not, as the case might be. Each knew the number of his own dead and mourned them. A mass was said for all collectively; then they wended their way to the cemetery, and tipped the contents of the tapestry into the common grave, and covered them all over with a shroud of lime.

The 18th of April was the crisis of the first outbreak – the numbers rose to nearly a thousand! At that time, I lived, as I have said, in the rue Saint-Lazare, in the square d'Orléans, and I saw from my windows every day fifty to sixty funerals pass on their way to the Montmartre cemetery. It was with this prospect before my eyes that I wrote one of my gayest comedies: *Le Mari de la veuve.* This is how the play came about. Mademoiselle Dupont, the excellent soubrette of the Comédie-Française, who laughed with such rosy lips and white teeth, she who was the most impudent Martine I have ever seen, had obtained a benefit performance. I had known her more at Firmin's house privately than at the theatre; she had never acted in any of my plays. One morning—it was, so far as I can recollect, the very day before 29 March, on which day the cholera was to burst forth—she came to see me. Everything was ready for her benefit. She came to ask me to write her a narrative scene. It was Saturday, I think: the performance was to take place on the following Tuesday or Wednesday. There was no time to lose. I am stupid at improvising anything appropriate to such an occasion as this; and yet how could I refuse the charming soubrette a demand of so little importance?

"Defer the performance until Saturday," I said to her, "and, instead of one scene, I will write you a one-act comedy."

"Will you promise to do this?"

"On my honour!"

"I will go and see if it be possible, and I will return in an hour's time."

Twenty minutes later I received a note from Mademoiselle Dupont telling me she had obtained a respite of twelve days, and asking me to make a part in it for Mademoiselle Mars. I had not been on very friendly terms with Mademoiselle Mars since *Antony*, and she had not taken the trouble to make it up with me.

Now I had one friend, a man of infinite cleverness, head or second in command at the Home Offices,—a friend who has since made his name in the Government. He was called, and happily still calls himself, Eugène Durieu. I had met him two or three times during the past year, and every time he had given me the subject for a play, either in one act, or two or in three. But I do not know why we had never yet settled anything. I wrote to him and he came to me.

"Let us look over your subjects," I said; "I want a play in one act for Mademoiselle Dupont's benefit"—

"Are you crazy? She is billed for next Tuesday!"

"It is put off for a week."

"And you think a play could be written, read, distributed, learned and played between now and then?"

"I will do my part."

"Really."

"A day to write the play, one to get it re-copied, one for reading it; there will still be seven days for the rehearsals; a luxurious allowance!"

Eugène Durieu recognised the correctness of the calculation and gave me the benefit of his ideas. We thought of the subject of *Le Mari de la veuve*; but the plan was a long way from completion.

"Listen!" I said to Durieu, "it is noon; I have business until five o'clock. Anicet Bourgeois wishes to have his turn at the Théâtre-Français; why, I don't know. Some whim of his! Go and find him for me; settle the outlines of the drama with him, return together at half-past four and we will dine together. In the evening we will arrange the numbering of the scenes; I can set to work on the play to-night or to-morrow morning, and, in any case, at whatever time I start upon it, it shall be finished twenty-four hours later."

Durieu left at a run. I returned at five, as I had said, and found my two collaborators at the task. The foundations were not yet laid; I came to the rescue. They left me at midnight, leaving me a number of scenes nearly

completed. The next day, as I had promised, I set to work. I was at my third or fourth scene when the chambermaid entered, looking terrified and as pale as death.

"Ah! Monsieur! Monsieur! Monsieur!" she said.

"Well, what is the matter, Catherine?"

"Ah! Monsieur it is . . . My God! My God!"

"What?"

"It is the cholera . . . Ah! Monsieur, I have the cramp!"

"The cholera is in Paris?"

"Yes, monsieur, it is, the scoundrel!"

"*Diable!* Are you sure what you say is true?"

"A man has just died in the rue Chauchat, monsieur. He had only been dead a quarter of an hour, and he is already as black as a nigger!"

"How did they treat him?"

"By rubbing, monsieur; but it was no use . . . Black, monsieur—quite black!"

"Perhaps they rubbed him with a blacking-brush."

"Oh, monsieur, you may joke! . . . Rue Chauchat, monsieur, in the rue Chauchat!"

Now, the rue Chauchat is next to the rue Saint-Lazare. What could prevent the cholera in leaving the rue Chauchat from passing along the rue Saint-Lazare and knocking at my own door?

"If the cholera rings, do not open to it, Catherine," I resumed. "I am going to see what is happening."

I took up my hat and went out. Then it was that I saw with my own eyes the spectacle of terror that I have tried to describe. I returned home, very much disinclined to write my comedy, I confess, and I wrote to Mademoiselle Dupont:—

"MA BELLE MARTINE,—I presume that when you settled the day for your performance you had reckoned without the cholera. It has just come from London and made its début two hours ago in the rue Chauchat. Its

début is making such a commotion that it will, I am afraid, spoil your takings. What ought I to do about the one-act comedy?—Yours always, ALEX. DUMAS"

Mademoiselle Dupont was at home, and I received the following reply by the same messenger as had taken my letter :—

"MY DEAR DUMAS,—My benefit has been on the way for such a long time that I want it done with, one way or another. Finish your play, then, I beseech you ; it must take its chance.—Always yours, DUPONT"

So I returned to *Le Mari de la veuve*. The play was finished in twenty-four hours, as I had promised. The principal part pleased Mademoiselle Mars, and she accepted it. Her presence in a play was a guarantee for speed. Indeed, we have already said how honest Mademoiselle Mars was in theatrical matters and with authors. She came punctually to the rehearsals, in spite of the cholera, and enraged me just as much over one act as she would have done over a five-act play. Each day she found some thing to correct ; and I had to take the play home and make the correction there. This was how *Le Mari de la veuve* was created, with that funereal background of which I have just been telling you. The play was exquisitely mounted : the five parts it contained were filled by Mademoiselle Mars, Monrose, Anaïs, Menjaud and Mademoiselle Dupont.

The play was performed on the appointed day. The cholera had proved a troublesome competitor ; there were not five hundred people in the theatre. The play had but a moderate success and obtained even a round of hissing. After Menjaud had been caught in a shower, he re-entered the castle shaking himself.

"What weather!" he said; "I am as drenched as College wine!"

A spectator hissed ; no doubt some schoolmaster.

The saying, though, was not mine; I had heard it said to Soulié a few days before, and had utilised it because I thought it so funny.

It was a fresh proof to me of the truth of the saying that what suits one person to perfection jars on another. I have hunted in all the newspapers for an account of the performance and cannot find any trace of it except in the *Annuaire historique* by Lesur and the *Gazette de France*. My readers will allow me to lay before them the twofold appreciation offered by criticism on the work: it is short and sincere. Here is Lesur's—

THÉÂTRE-FRANÇAIS

"*Performance for the benefit of Mademoiselle Dupuis . . .*"

[In the first place, Lesur is wrong: he should have said *Mademoiselle Dupont.*]

"*Le Mari de la veuve*, a Comedy in one Act, in prose by M. . . .

"No theatrical performance on a Benefit day ever offered a more melancholy aspect and a more scanty assembly. The cholera had invaded Paris; the town was given over to terror, riot ran rife through the street, drums beat at the hour for the opening of the box office. There were very few spectators that night bold enough to breathe the smell of camphor and lime in the solitudes of the Théâtre-Français in order to judge the merits of the new play. Under these circumstances, the absent hardly lost much.

"A few pleasant incidents and witty sayings, and the talent of Mademoiselle Mars, might be able to support this slight work for a *dozen or so of performances*.

"The author, who, doubtless, is not blind as to the unimportant nature of the play, maintains his anonymity."

That is one! Now let us pass on to the *Gazette de France*.

"A short Comedy has recently been performed: *Le Mari de la veuve*, by M. Alexandre Dumas, which, although the dialogue is written with plenty of go and naturalness,

offers very little in the way of common sense as to plot and truth of characterisation; but the play is so agreeably acted by Monrose, Menjaud, Mademoiselle Mars and Mademoiselle Dupont, that it ought to cause great amusement and much laughter among those who are inclined to make fun of the quibblers and silent indifference of the smaller newspapers against the Théâtre-Français, and to go oftener to this theatre than to *Atar-Gull* or to *Madame Gibou*."

The play has now been performed over three hundred times since its first appearance.

CHAPTER II

My régime against the cholera—I am attacked by the epidemic—I invent etherisation—Harel comes to suggest to me *La Tour de Nesle*—Verteuil's manuscript—Janin and the tirade of the *grandes dames*—First idea of the *prison scene*—My terms with Harel—Advantages offered by me to M. Gaillardet—The spectator in the Odéon—Known and unknown authors—My first letter to M. Gaillardet

THE cholera was running its course, but we had arrived at the stage of getting accustomed to it. In France, alas! we get used to everything! It was even said that the best way of fighting the cholera was not to think about it but to live as far as possible in one's ordinary way. This régime suited me excellently at the period in question. I wrote *Gaule et France*, a work which fatigued me very much in the way of study, to such an extent that I was not sorry to forget my day's work in the evening. Every night, accordingly, I had some friends with me: Fourcade, Collin, Boulanger, Liszt, Châtillon, Hugo at times, Delanoue nearly always. We talked and talked of art; sometimes we persuaded Hugo to read us poetry; Liszt, who never required much pressing, thumped on a bad piano with all his might, and he ended by breaking it to pieces; so the evening would fly by without any one thinking any more of the cholera than if it had been at St. Petersburg or Benares or Pekin. Besides, it had been calculated that five hundred deaths per day, out of a million of men, was not quite one death per thousand, and, taking everything into consideration, one had far more chance of being one of the thousand living souls

than the one dead one. This calculation, it will be seen, was exceedingly reassuring. In the midst of all this, Harel, who was at loggerheads with Hugo, came to me from time to time to tease me to write him another play. He made out that it was a most favourable time, that nothing was being a success elsewhere, and that the first-comer to make a success under such circumstances would have a run of a hundred performances.

As for the cholera, he treated it as a myth, and put it on a level with the ghosts of Semiramis and of Hamlet; he put a bit of paper into his snuff-box to remind himself that he was in Paris. The object of his pursuing me with such determination was a drama entitled *La Tour de Nesle*, in which he said there was originality enough to set all Paris on fire with excitement. I rejected the tempter energetically, telling him that the same subject had been suggested to me twice before; once by Roger de Beauvoir, author of *L'Écolier de Cluny*; also by Fourcade, who, at that time, was anxious to produce literature.

Henri Fourcade was Fourcade's brother, my old friend, of whom I have already spoken with reference to my early love affairs at Villers-Cotterets; who, it will be recollected, danced so well, and had in his pocket a second pair of gloves to change, when he went to the ball—a luxury at which I had been struck dumb. One night, then, when we had been laughing, talking, spouting verses, playing music, and having supper, as I was about to see my friends out and was lighting them from the top of my landing, I felt suddenly overtaken with a slight trembling in my legs; I took no notice of it and lent against the bannisters, half to light those who were going downstairs and half to support myself, as I shouted a ringing, cheerful *au revoir*! to them. Then, when the sound of their footsteps was lost in the square, I turned round to go into my rooms.

"Oh, monsieur!" said Catherine to me, "how pale you are!"

"Nonsense; am I really, Catherine?" I said laughingly.

"Go and look in the glass, sir, and see."

I followed her advice and looked in the glass. I was, indeed, exceedingly pale. At the same time, I was seized with a shaking which gradually turned to a violent shivering fit.

"It is queer," I said; "I feel very cold."

"Ah! monsieur," cried Catherine; "that is how it begins."

"What, Catherine?"

"The cholera, monsieur."

"You think I have the cholera then, Catherine?"

"Oh! I am sure of it, monsieur."

"Oh! Then, Catherine, let us lose no time: get a lump of sugar, dip it in ether and fetch a doctor."

Catherine went away, tumbling against the furniture as she left, and exclaiming—

"Oh! *mon Dieu!* Master has the cholera!"

Meanwhile, as I felt my strength failing rapidly, I went up to my bed, undressed myself as fast as possible, and lay down. I shivered more and more. Catherine returned; the poor girl was nearly off her head: instead of bringing me a lump of sugar dipped in ether, she brought me a wineglassful of ether. When I say full, I should add that, by good fortune, her hand had trembled so much that the glass was no more than two-thirds full. She gave it to me. With more reason for my condition than she, I hardly knew what I was doing; I did not remember what it was I had asked her for, and was ignorant of the contents of the glass she held out to me, I carried it to my lips and swallowed a whole ounce of ether at a gulp. I felt as though I had swallowed the sword of the Avenging Angel! I heaved a sigh, closed my eyes, and my head fell back on the pillow. No chloroform ever produced a quicker result. From that moment and for two hours my unconsciousness lasted, I knew nothing at all; only, when I opened my eyes again, I was in a

vapour bath which, by means of a pipe, my doctor was administering to me beneath my bedclothes, whilst a good neighbour was rubbing me on the top of the sheets with a warming-pan full of embers. I do not know what I shall feel like in hell, but I shall never even there be more nearly roasted than I was that night. I spent five or six days without being able to put a foot out of my bed; I was literally exhausted. Every day Harel's card was brought in; he was told, as was everybody else, that I could not see visitors. When I again opened my doors to people, the first thing I saw through the half-opened door was his smiling, clever face.

"What about the cholera?" I asked.

"It has departed!"

"Are you sure of it?"

"It did not pay its expenses. . . . Ah! my friend, what a capital time for launching a drama!"

"Do you think so?"

"There will be a reaction in favour of the theatres; besides, you saw what I put in the newspapers?"

"Yes, about the places of entertainment not having had a single case of cholera in them. . . . My dear Harel, you are the cleverest man of the nineteenth century!"

"Oh! not so!"

"Why not?"

"You can well see why not, since I cannot get you to write me a play."

"In all conscience, am I in a fit state for doing it?"

"You? . . ."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I am possessed with all the devils of a fever."

"They will give you an inspiration."

"But, seriously, let me see what your play is about."

"Well, I am going to tell you the truth."

"Really?"

"On my honour."

"Harel! Harel! Harel!"

" How stupid you are ! "

" You can see very well that I did not make you say it."

" But if you make me say it ; it only proves your cleverness, because you make me stupid."

" Come, stop affectations ! what were we saying ? "

" That a young man from Tonnerre, named Frédérick Gaillardet, has brought me a MS. which has some ideas in it, but he has never had anything to do with the stage ; it is not, dramatically speaking, any good as it is. But I have entered into treaty with him because I have my own plans."

" Let us hear what they are."

" For a long time Janin has wanted to write a drama."

" Good ! "

" I said, ' Here is your excuse ready to hand ! ' I took my young author's MS. to him."

" Next ? "

" He read it."

" And then ? "

" He agreed with me that there was dramatic material in it.

" And that drama . . . ? "

" He has hunted for it for six weeks, and not found it."

" Then he has added nothing to the original manuscript."

" Indeed, he has rewritten it."

" What then ? "

" It is better written, but no more fit for acting."

" So that it has already two authors ? "

" You need not trouble yourself about Janin."

" Why not ? "

" Because, this morning, he took his own MS. and that of M. Gaillardet in his arms, and flung them on Georges's sofa, saying to me, ' You and your drama there can go to the devil ! ' "

" Then you came to me ; thanks ! "

" What does that matter to you, my friend ? Read this."

" But I tell you I am very weak. I cannot even read."

"I will send Verteuil to you; he will read the piece to you: he reads very well."

"Shall I not get into trouble with your young man?"

"He is as meek as a lamb, my dear fellow!"

"I see, and you wish to shear him?"

"There is no talking seriously with you."

"Send Verteuil to me."

"When?"

"When you like."

"He shall be here in an hour."

"Very well, are you going?"

"I have no mind to stay."

"Why not?"

"You would only have some one to contradict you."

"Oh! I do not promise anything."

"That is needless, since you are pledged."

"To what?"

"To deliver me the play in a fortnight."

"Harel!"

"Take pains over Georges' part."

"Harel!"

"Good-bye!"

Harel was gone.

"Oh, the brute!" I muttered, falling back on to my pillow; "he will give me a relapse."

An hour later, as Harel had said, Verteuil was in the house. He expected to find me sitting up and convalescent; but he found me in bed, burning with fever, and reduced in weight by twenty-five pounds. I frightened him.

"Oh!" he said, "you are not going to work in that state?"

"What the deuce do you expect else, my dear fellow, as Harel insists on it!"

"No, I will take the MS. away, and tell Mademoiselle Georges that it is impossible, short of killing you."

"Is there anything in that MS.?"

"Certainly, it has some ideas, but . . ."

"But what?"

"Ah! you shall see . . . I dare not say."

"Then leave it to me; I will read it."

"When?"

"At my leisure. Is the writing clear, by the way?"

"I recopied it myself."

"Good!"

"I have only brought Janin's version of the MS., to save you as much time as possible." [1]

"Is there much difference between the two MSS.?"

"What do you mean?"

"Structurally?"

"It is the same thing, except for one or two tirades added by Janin."

"What about the form?"

"Oh well! it has style, you know; it is smart, brilliant, trenchant."

"I will take note of that."

"When do you wish me to return?"

"Return to-morrow."

"At what hour?"

"About noon."

"To-morrow at noon, then; rest as much as you can till then."

"I will try. . . . Adieu."

"Adieu!" He gave me his hand.

"Take care of yourself, you are frightfully feverish."

"That is just what I am reckoning upon. A thousand compliments to Georges; she need not be anxious; if there is a suitable rôle for her, it shall be created, or I will know the reason why."

"Have you nothing else for me to tell her?"

"Only that that I love her with all my heart."

Verteuil went away, leaving me alone with the fever and the copy of Janin's MS.

[1] In the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, 1854, both M. Gaillardet's and M. Janin's MSS. are referred to as having been brought, both here and later.

Once again I repeat it (and these lines are addressed to M. Frédérick Gaillardet), Heaven save me, after the lapse of twenty-one years, from seeming to have hostile intentions towards a man who did me the honour of risking his life against mine, in exchanging pistol shots with me; but I must, according to my accustomed frankness, relate things as they happened, very certain that, if it is still necessary at this date, the memories of Bocage, of Georges, of Janin and of Verteuil will agree with mine. Having made this assertion, I will continue my narrative. When left to myself, I began to read the manuscript. The play began at the second scene, that is to say, with Orsini's monologue. Finally, the second scene, which was then the first, remained pretty much as it was. There was, as Verteuil had told me, and as I myself recognised later, no other difference between M. Gaillardet's MS. and Janin's than the style. Janin, as is known, is, in this respect, a master before whom small fry bow and great ones salute. But a complete tirade, probably the most brilliant in the whole drama, belonged to Janin: it was the one of the *grandes dames*. Did he avenge himself here on some *lady*, some one he believed to be a *great lady*? I do not know at all; but although the tirade is well known, we will reproduce it here.

" BURIDAN.

Vous ne savez donc pas où nous sommes ?

PHILIPPE.

Où sommes-nous ?

BURIDAN.

Vous ne savez donc pas quelles sont ces femmes ?

PHILIPPE.

Vous êtes tout ému, Buridan !

BURIDAN.

Ces femmes, n'avez-vous pas quelque soupçon de leur rang ? . . . N'avez-vous pas remarqué que ce doivent être de grandes dames ? . . . Avez-vous vu, car je pense qu'il vient de vous arriver, à vous, ce qui vient de m'arriver, à moi,—avez-vous vu, dans vos amours

de garnison, beaucoup de mains aussi blanches, beaucoup de sourires aussi froids? . . . Avez-vous remarqué ces riches habits, ces voix si douces, ces regards si faux? Ce sont de grandes dames vovez-vous! . . . Elles nous ont fait chercher dans la nuit par une femme vieille et voilée, qui avait des paroles mielleuses. Oh! ce sont de grandes dames! . . . A peine sommes nous entrés dans cet endroit éblouissant, parfumé et chaud à enivrer, qu'elles nous ont accueillis, avec mille tendresses, qu'elles se sont livrées à nous sans détour, sans retard, à nous tout de suite, à nous inconnus et tout mouillés de cet orage. Vous voyez bien que ce sont de grandes dames! . . . A table,—et c'est notre histoire à tous deux, n'est-ce pas?—à table, elles se sont abandonées à tout ce que l'amour et l'ivresse ont d'emportement et d'oubli; elles ont blasphémé; elles ont tenu d'étranges discours et d'odieuses paroles; elles ont oublié toute retenue, toute pudeur, oublié la terre, oublié le ciel. Ce sont de grandes dames, de très-grandes dames, je vous le répète!"

The first fault which struck me, a theatrical man, in the work, was that the play began really at the second scene, and, consequently, none of the parts were known or the characters properly revealed; so that while reading this tower scene, the tavern scene began to appear to me as in a cloud. But I did not stop short there, it was not a suitable moment. I began the second; but I protest that I did not go further than the eighth or tenth page. The drama completely deviated from the course which, in my opinion, it ought to have taken.

The essential crux of the drama to me was the struggle between Buridan and Margaret of Burgundy, between an adventurer and a queen, the one armed with all the resources of his genius, the other with the powerful allies of her rank. Of course, genius is naturally made to triumph over power. Then I had had an idea in my head for a long time which I thought highly dramatic; and I wanted to try to get that situation put before the public.

A man is arrested, sentenced, and laid in the depths of a dungeon, without resource or hope; a man who will be lost if his enemy has the courage not to come and mock at his abasement, but to have him poisoned, strangled, or

stabbed in his corner; the man will be saved if his enemy yields to the desire to come and insult him for the last time; for, with speech, the sole weapon left him, he would frighten his enemy so that the latter would loosen the chains on his arms a little, and the iron collar round his neck, and open to him the door which he had hitherto so carefully closed upon him, and lead forth in triumph the man who expected that, if he ever left his living tomb at all, it would only be to mount the scaffold.

The struggle between Margaret of Burgundy and Buridan gave me the idea for this situation. It will be well understood that I did not let such a scene slip. It is the one that has since been named *la scène de la prison*. That settled, I did not trouble any further over the rest. I wrote to Harel that I was his man for *La Tour de Nesle*, and begged him to come and arrange the terms under which this new drama should be done.

I must explain to the public what I mean by settling the terms. I wished—since Janin loyally, more than loyally, generously, withdrew from the collaboration—that M. Gaillardet, who had temporarily given up his share to Janin, should take that share to himself again. At that period, unless under private treaty, author's rights at the theatre Porte-Saint-Martin, for which M. Gaillardet's drama was intended, were 48 francs for author's share and 24 francs' worth of tickets per night. Consequently, 24 francs for author's rights and 12 francs' worth of tickets were conceded to Janin. Janin, as we have said, gave up his share; I wanted this share to be returned to M. Gaillardet, and my rights to be settled independently, as if I had been a complete stranger to the work. I laid down also, as a condition, *sine quâ non*, that my name should be left out. It was agreed in the contract with Janin that his name should be given. Harel raised no difficulties over granting me my separate treaty, which was the same as in *Christine*: 10 francs per hundred of the takings, and 36 to 40 francs' worth of tickets, I be-

lieve. Nothing could be objected to, as the rights were proportional—if it paid, I gained; if it did not, I only made a light demand on the receipts. Now, take careful notice, that, at this time of cholera, two or three hundred francs were quite large takings. The Odéon once played before one spectator who refused to have his money returned, and insisted that they should go through the performance for him and then hissed it. But, by hissing, the wretched man raised a weapon against himself; the manager sent for a police officer, who, with the excuse that the hisser disturbed the performance, put him outside the doors. Harel, I say, made no difficulty of any kind over my separate contract; but he did over my wishing to maintain my incognito: I had a hard struggle over this, and he poured upon me all the dazzling splendours of his wit and the thundering ammunition of his paradoxes. I held out and Harel retired conquered. It was settled and signed that I was to have my separate contract, that I should not be named, that M. Gaillardet should alone be mentioned by name on the night of the first performance and on the bills, and that he alone should take the whole of the rights granted by the Porte-Saint-Martin theatre at the time when he signed his treaty; but, I reserved to myself the right to put the drama under my own name among my complete works. From that moment, Verteuil never left me; he came every morning, and, as much dictated as written by his hand, every night he carried a scene away with him. After the prison scene, Harel rushed in. It was a *chef d'œuvre*, which would even put the success of *Henri III.* into the shade. I laughed. I really must let my name be given; it was impossible otherwise. I grew angry, and Harel took himself off in despair. Theatrical managers, in those days, had a singular idea to which, indeed, they have returned latterly: it was that they made more money, with equal merit, when the name of the author was known, than if it were unknown. I think they were mistaken. The better

the name be known, the more it rouses jealous feelings on the part of criticism : the less it be known, the more kindly does criticism favour it. Criticism, which does not produce children of its own, only picks up and fondles orphans which it can adopt ; but it turns, angry and growling, on those children who are supported by a vigorous parentage. Nowadays, managers have fallen into the opposite abuse. They have hunted out from the collections of proverbs all the pieces which were no good at all—comedies which were not comedies, dramas which were not dramas—and played them with more or less success. The object of this attempt was, I believe, meant at least to prove that dramatic art is an art by itself ; a rare and difficult one, seeing that Greece has only bequeathed to us Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles and Aristophanes ; Rome, only Plautus, Terence and Seneca ; England, only Shakespeare and Sheridan ; Italy, only Machiavelli and Alfieri ; Spain, only Lopes de Vega, Calderon, Alarcon and Tirso de Molina ; Germany, only Goethe and Schiller ; and France, only Corneille, Rotrou, Molière, Racine, Voltaire and Beaumarchais ; that is to say, but twenty-three names floating on an ocean of twenty-three centuries ! Actually, this is what happens in my opinion : more noise is made round the work of a known author ; people wait for and receive the appearance of such work with greater curiosity ; but the public also becomes more exacting in proportion as the reputation of the writer increases : they get tired of hearing a man called *happy* ; as the Athenians grew tired of hearing Aristides called *the Just* ; and reaction operates with a harshness all the stronger as the previous favouritism has been great. Finally, the man who falls, if unknown, only falls from the height of the play by which he has made his début ; the known author who falls, on the contrary, falls from the height of all his past successes. I have experienced this in my own case ; at three epochs in my life, reaction has disturbed me to the point that, in

order to keep the footing I had arrived at, I had to exert greater efforts than those I had made in reaching that stage. We are not far from the first of these epochs, and I will relate this phase of my life with the same simplicity as I have related the rest. After nine days of work, which retarded my convalescence by more than a month, Verteuil carried away the last scenes of the drama, with the following letter addressed to Harel :—

"DEAR FRIEND,—Do not be distressed at these two last scenes. They are weak, I grant; when I got to the end, my strength failed me. Look upon them as null and void, as they will have to be rewritten. But give me two or three days' rest, and don't be uneasy. I begin to be of your opinion : there are the elements of a tremendous success in the work.—Yours always,

"ALEX. DUMAS"

After the fourth act, the poorest in the whole work, Harel had written to me—

"MY DEAR DUMAS,—I have received your fourth act. Hum! hum! Your King Louis, the headstrong, is a droll figure, indeed! But, he has abundance of wit, and wit makes anything go well. I await the fifth act.—Yours etc. HAREL"

The fifth act arrived; only, it was even worse than the fourth! Harel rushed to me with crape on his hat and his head covered with ashes. He was in mourning for his lost success. Nothing I could say reassured him; I must set to work again that very night. Two days later, the scenes were rewritten, and Harel's mind set at rest. The same day I wrote to M. Gaillardet, keeping as far as possible to my own side of the proceedings :—

"MONSIEUR,—M. Harel, with whom I have been in continual business relations, has come to ask me to give him *some advice* about a work *by you* which he wishes to put on the stage.

"I seized with pleasure the opportunity of bringing forward a young fellow-dramatist, whom I have not the honour of knowing, but to whom I most sincerely wish success. I have smoothed down all the difficulties which would present themselves to you in the putting into rehearsal of a first piece of work, and *your* play, as it now is, seems to me capable of succeeding.

"I do not need to tell you, sir, that you *alone* will be the author, and that *my name will not even be mentioned*; this is the condition under which I undertook the work to which I have been so fortunate as to be able to add. If you look upon what I have done for you in the light of a kindness, allow me to *give* it you rather than *sell* it you.

"ALEX. DUMAS"

Indeed, from my point of view, at any rate, it was really giving my services; although I had superseded Janin as collaborator, I did not take either the author's rights nor the rights to tickets belonging to the collaboration, which, in the contract, remained in Harel's hands, and by virtue of which Harel returned to Janin. Had Harel the right, from Janin's consent, and at his (Janin's) entreaty to substitute me for Janin? I think he had, as my substitution left M. Gaillardet's name alone on the bills, and gave him 48 francs for rights and 12 for tickets, instead of 24 francs for rights and 6 for tickets. M. Gaillardet gained, therefore, from the monetary point of view, as he received double; and he gained in reputation, because his name alone appeared. It remains to prove that the Contract Janin-Gaillardet and Harel had passed under the control of the former contract, according only 48 francs in rights and 12 in tickets. This will be easy for me to do with the two dates. The Contract of Janin-Gaillardet and Harel was signed on 29 March 1832, and the fresh treaty, which still holds good to-day at the Porte-Saint-Martin theatre, was not signed between M. Harel and the Commission of Authors, till the following 11 April. I repeat, I would rather have passed over this ridiculous quarrel as to the paternity of the play in silence;

but I am compelled to lay details before my readers which will interest them but indifferently, but for which, however, they would have the right to ask if I passed them over in silence. I am writing the history of art during the first half of the nineteenth century; I speak of myself as of a stranger; I lay my plays open to the inspection of my natural arbitrator, the public; it shall judge my work, as they say at the palace. I will neither make out M. Gaillardet to be right or wrong; I will write merely a recitative, and not an argument—

Ad narrandum, non ad probandum.

CHAPTER III

M. Gaillardet's answer and protest—Frédérick and Buridan's part—Transaction with M. Gaillardet—First performance of *La Tour de Nesle*—The play and its interpreters—The day following a success—M. * * * —A profitable trial in prospect—Georges' caprice—The manager, author and collaborator

GREAT was my astonishment when I received an answer from M. Gaillardet, which, instead of being full of gratitude, was a protest. He wrote that the play was his own and belonged only to him ; that he had not intended to have, and never would have, a collaborator. I confess I was astounded. The play, as everybody thought, was unactable as it was, and Janin had given it up, openly admitting that he did not know what to do to make it better. I flew off to Harel. I had not asked him to communicate the agreement to me, but had simply believed in his word. I accused him of having deceived me. He thereupon took the contract from his desk and made me read it.

This is what it was, verbally—

" Between MM. Gaillardet and Jules Janin on the one part :
" And M. Harel, manager of the Porte-Saint-Martin, on the other part ;

" It is agreed as follows :

" MM. Gaillardet and Jules Janin remit and hand over to M. Harel, a five-act drama entitled *La Tour de Nesle*, to be played at the Porte-Saint-Martin theatre.

"M. Harel receives the work and will have it performed immediately.

"Copy made at Paris, 29 March 1832.

Signed: "F. GAILLARDET. J. JANIN. HAREL"

As MM. Janin and Gaillardet *remitted and handed over* their drama conjointly, M. Gaillardet must have had a collaborator, and that collaborator was stated to be M. Janin. Now, he always had a collaborator; only, that collaborator did not take half his rights from him, and was not called Janin or anybody else, since he was never named at all. I can but believe that it was the person of Janin who was regretted by M. Gaillardet; for, as we saw, he himself wrote later that Janin had been surreptitiously imposed upon him. Harel had no difficulty in convincing me that it was within his rights to bring me M. Gaillardet's drama, as it had been *remitted* and *handed over* to him without embargo. The drama had not been done over again by me; had it been necessary to rewrite the play completely I should certainly never have undertaken the task; but what was done was done straightforwardly and in good faith. The welfare of the theatre, ruined by the riotings and cholera, rested entirely on this work. I was the first to advise that the arrival of M. Gaillardet should be awaited. After the delivery of the first scene, moreover, the play had been put in rehearsal. Now, at the first of these rehearsals, a very curious incident happened. The two principal parts had been given to Georges and Frédérick; but, as I have said, the cholera upset everything. Frédérick, who came to listen to the reading of the first act, and who had carried away the part, was afraid of the cholera; he kept away in the country and, in spite of the notices of the rehearsals, gave no sign of life. Five or six rehearsals took place before he turned up or sent news of himself. He was a man of capricious talent, violent and passionate, and, accordingly, very natural in passionate, violent and capricious characters. He was

the French Kean. Harel could neither wait for the end of Frédérick's fear nor for that of the cholera. He decided to engage some one else since Frédérick persisted in staying away; and he looked about him. Bocage was out of an engagement: he entered into negotiations with him. Bocage took the part, promised to rehearse it in spite of all the choleras on the earth, returned home, and began to study it. Next day, he came to the theatre without his manuscript: he knew his first scene. The report of what had occurred reached Frédérick; he rushed up, and I never saw anybody in such a state of vexation as he was. Frédérick is a great actor, an artist of talent and feeling; he was hurt in both these directions. He offered as much as 5000 francs to Bocage if the latter would give up his part, but Bocage refused it, and the part remained his.

Your grief was a fine sight, Frédérick, and I shall never forget it!

The rehearsals continued with Bocage and Mademoiselle Georges. One day, Harel, who then lived in the rue Bergère, sent to fetch me. M. Gaillardet had just arrived, and the following extract represents his state of mind. I will borrow from him direct, so much do I desire to remain neutral in this discussion.

"... I started, and before going home I went dressed as I was in my travelling costume, to see M. Harel.

"'I am ruined!' he said to me. 'I have deceived you, that is the truth. Now what shall you do?'

"'Stop the play.'

"'You will not succeed in doing that; *I shall change the title and play it*; you can attack me for piracy, theft, plagiarism, anything you like. You will obtain 1200 francs indemnity. If you allow it to be played, on the contrary, you will gain 1200 francs, etc. etc.'

"He said the truth, for that is the protection our judges ordinarily allow to an author who has been defrauded."

If I remember rightly, it was in this interval that I arrived. The discussion was violent on both sides, and

the explanations were equally violent. We had to leave Harel to hunt up seconds on both sides. Harel, however, intervened, calmed us down, and induced M. Gaillardet to sign a deed by which we acknowledged ourselves joint-authors of *La Tour de Nesle*. We each reserved to ourselves the right to put our names to the play in our complete works. The play was to be played and published under the name of M. Gaillardet alone ; but Harel insisted that there should be asterisks after his name. When this deed was signed, the rehearsals went on uninterruptedly.

As the play developed, it assumed great proportions, and I began to believe, with Harel, that it would be a big success. The parts of Marguerite and of Buridan were just made for Georges and for Bocage, who were both splendid in them. Lockroy, who, out of friendship for me, played the part of Gaultier d'Aulnay, was deliciously youthful and loverlike and poetic in it ; Provost (as Savoisy), Serres (as Landry) and Delafosse (as Philippe d'Aulnay) completed the characters.

The day of the first performance came : 29 May 1832 ; I had sent a box ticket to Odilon Barrot, telling him I would dine with him, and reserving a place for myself in his box. The dinner lasted longer than we expected ; Madame Odilon Barrot, then young and charming, always a clever and original woman—a rare thing among women—was upon thorns. The great demagogue had no notion anybody could feel so much impatience to see a first performance of a play. We arrived in the middle of the second scene, just in time to hear the tirade of the *grandes dames*. The theatre was in a state of boiling excitement : the audience felt the success of the play, it was in the air, they breathed it. The end of the second scene is terrible in its impressiveness : Buridan leaping from the window into the Seine, Marguerite revealing her bleeding cheek, and exclaiming—" ' Look at thy face and then die,' saidest thou ? Let it be done as thou wishest. . . . Look, and die ! " This was all startling and terrible ! And, when,

after the orgy, the flight, the assassination, the laughter extinguished in groans, the man flung into the river, the lover of a night pitilessly murdered by his royal mistress, the careless and monotonous voice of the night watchman is heard calling, " Three o'clock and a quiet night: Parisians sleep ! " the audience burst forth into loud applause.

The third scene is poor, I must candidly admit ; it was nearly all written by me, and it was a bit of gagging ; still, it does not allow interest to languish ; the second had sated the spectators for a time. It will be recollected that, except for an alteration in the staging, the second scene was almost entirely the same as in M. Gaillardet's manuscript. The end of the third scene, however, relieves the beginning ; the last scene was entirely concerned with Gaultier d'Aulnay, who comes to demand vengeance for the murder of his brother from Marguerite of Bourgogne, without knowing that the murder had been committed by her. Lockroy's exhibition of grief was magnificent.

The fourth scene was scarcely better than the third; it was the one where Buridan and Marguerite meet in the Orsini tavern, where Marguerite tears from the diary entrusted to her lover the famous page which proves the murder. The principal scene was an improbable one ; I had tried my hand at it three or four times before I succeeded. Let me add that I have never been satisfied with it ; Georges, who, for her part too, felt it was false, did not play it so well as the others. But the audience was captivated, and in that frame of mind which accepts everything.

The fifth scene was short, spirited, sensitive and full of surprises. The arrest and exit of Buridan made the greatest sensation. Finally, came the famous prison act.

One day, my son asked me—he had not yet written plays at that time—

" What are the first principles of a drama ? "

" That the first act be lucid, the last short and, above all, that there be no prison scene in the third ! "

When I said that I was ungrateful: I have never seen such an effect as that prison act, and it was marvellously played, besides, by the two actors concerned with it, who have the whole responsibility of it. Serres (Landry) was delightfully artless and whimsical in it. Bocage, with his great Sicilian eyes, his teeth as white as pearls, and his black beard, was of a physical beauty to which, perhaps, I have only seen one other man attain: Mélingue, one of the most beautiful actors I ever saw on the stage.

After the prison scene, the other might be indifferently either good or bad, for success was assured. This was not unfortunate!

The seventh scene, like the third, was the weakest in the work; it was saved by its wit, and because, all things considered, the spectators, like Harel, thought King Louis, the headstrong, was *a droll figure*.

Finally came the fifth act, which had so much frightened Harel. It was divided into two scenes: the eighth, of a diabolical humour; the ninth, which, for appalling dramatic character might be compared with the second. Something about it reminded one of the ancient fatalism of Sophocles, blended with the scenic terrors of Shakespeare. So its success was enormous, and the name of M. Frédérick Gaillardet was proclaimed amidst loud applause.

Madame Odilon Barrot was in ecstasy, and enjoyed herself like a schoolgirl. Odilon Barrot, little accustomed to melodramatic theatrical displays, was astounded that emotion could be carried so far. Of course, as in the case of *Richard Darlington*, Harel came and made me all sorts of offers if I would consent to have my name mentioned. I had refused in *Richard*, where nothing pledged me to it; I refused more firmly still in the case of *La Tour de Nesle*, where I was bound both by a promise of honour and a written one.

I returned home, I vow it, without a single feeling of regret. It was, however, the first performance of a play which was to hold the bills for nearly eight hundred times!

Next day, several of my friends, who knew the part I had taken in *La Tour de Nesle*, came to pay me their compliments. Amongst these was one of my best friends, Pierre Collin.

"Do you know what Harel has done?" he said to me as he was coming in.

"What has he done?"

"What he has put on the bills?"

"No."

"Instead of proceeding as in mathematics, from the known to the unknown, he has proceeded from the unknown to the known."

"I do not understand."

"Instead of putting: 'MM. Gaillardet et * * *,' he has put et 'MM. * * * et Gaillardet.'"

"Oh, the rascal!" I exclaimed, "he will cause me a fresh quarrel with M. Gaillardet; and, what is worse, this time M. Gaillardet will be in the right." I took up my hat and walking-stick.

"Where are you going?"

"I am going to Harel. Will you come with me?"

"I must go to my office."

"Then, quick, call a carriage! I will drop you there in passing."

I was at Harel's five minutes later.

"Ah! there you are!" he said to me; "you have learnt the trick I have played off on Gaillardet?"

"It is because I have learnt of it that I have hurried here. . . . It is very wrong of you, my dear friend!"

"Really! Why? Was it not agreed that the asterisks should precede M. Gaillardet's name? It is your right: you are four years his senior in theatrical matters."

One dat is the custom for asterisks to follow a plays at tha

"What ars a fool, my dear; we will either change it

"That th sense into it; we both have enough and to that there be e devil takes us!"

"Say you have quite enough by yourself."

"Ah! You would betray me? You would go against me?"

"Oh no, I remain neutral; only, if M. Gaillardet calls on me as a witness, I shall be obliged to tell the truth."

"My dear fellow, we have a great success already; with a touch of scandal we shall have a tremendous success. . . . If M. Gaillardet objects, our scandal is to hand. He will then have done something for the play at any rate."

"Harel!"

"Oh! you are really delightful! You think it is enough to make masterpieces and to say, 'I did not do them.' Very well, whether it suits you or not, all Paris shall know that you did."

"Go to the devil! I wish I had never touched your cursed play. . . . Listen, some one is ringing your bell; I bet it is M. Gaillardet."

Harel opened his door and listened a moment.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"I do not know, sir," the servant answered; "it is a man carrying a stamped paper."

"A stamped paper? . . . This is something of a novelty! Show him in."

The man was a sheriff's officer who came on behalf of M. Gaillardet, and who, like Haman for Mardocheus, served as a *herald to his fame*. The stamped document was a summons before the Tribunal of Commerce, seeking to force M. Harel to remove the unlucky asterisks.

"Good!" I cried, "this is a joint affair! I shall find the same when I get back home. You were an idiot to play this prank!"

Harel rubbed his hands together until all his joints cracked.

"A fine lawsuit," he said, "an excellent lawsuit! I only ask two such per year for six years and my fortune is made!"

"But you will lose the case!"

"I know that, very well."

"In that case it will be a bad lawsuit."

"First of all, I would have you to know that a lawsuit is not necessarily a bad one because one may lose it; and if I lose it I shall appeal."

"But you will lose it then, for I tell you I shall be against you."

"You will say that you have nothing to do with the play, I suppose?"

"I shall say that I must not be named."

"Meanwhile, you will be mentioned at the Tribunal of Commerce, at the Court of Appeal, by M. Gaillardet's solicitor and by your own; the newspapers will copy the law proceedings, the three asterisks will have made the public talk when placed before the name, and will do so if they are put after it; the MSS. will be put in, M. Gaillardet's, Janin's and yours. . . . My dear fellow, I only reckoned upon a hundred performances; now I will bet on two hundred."

"May the devil take you!"

"Will you not stay to dinner with us?"

"Thanks."

"Yes, indeed. . . . Does not Georges bless you?"

"Is she satisfied with her success?"

"Delighted! Although you have rather sacrificed her part to Bocage, you will admit."

"Good! is she also going to bring an action against me?"

"She has a good mind to do so, and it might, indeed, happen, unless you promise to write a play for her."

"Oh! I promise her that, if that is all she wants."

"She has an idea."

"It is not divorce?" Georges had been teasing me for a long time to write her a play upon the Emperor's divorce.

"No, don't be anxious!"

I went up and saw her. She was as beautiful as the

conquering Semiramis. We greeted each other as cordially as we always do when we meet. I told her the whole story about M. Gaillardet, and I was grieved to see that she thought Harel entirely in the right.

"Well, all right," I said; "let us not talk any more about it. . . . By the bye, what is this he tells me?"

"Harel?"

"Yes."

"Some tomfoolery."

"Exactly. . . . He tells me that you had an idea in your mind."

"Insolent man!"

"An idea for a play, be it understood. *Peste!* You have something much better than ideas: you have your caprices."

"Not with you, in any case!"

"That is just what I complain of."

I went on my knees before her and kissed her lovely hands.

"Tell me then, Georges, shall we be held ridiculous in the eyes of posterity, for having come in contact with one another without the assistance of which Descartes talks."

"Be quiet, you big animal! and go and talk such nonsense to your dear Dorval."

"Oh! Dorval! . . . poor Dorval, I have not seen her for an age!"

"Good! when you have been living door to door with her."

"Precisely so! Formerly we had only one door between us! Now we have a wall."

"A partition only!"

"Bravo! Ah! but let us hear your idea."

"Well, my dear, I have played princesses and I have played queens . . .

"And even empresses!"

"Stop, that is for you to do." She lifted up to me her beautiful hand, which I stopped to kiss in its passage.

"And even empresses!" I repeated.

"All right, I want to play a woman of the people."

"Yes! I know you! You would play that in a velvet dress and all your diamonds."

"No! I tell you, I mean a woman of the people, a beggar-woman!"

"Bah! Come forward as far as the footlights, stretch your hand out to the audience, and there would be no more play, or rather no more beggar-woman."

"What pasture have you been browsing on to-day?"

"On one which grew in your dressing-room one day when Harel shut me up to write *Napoléon*."

"Come, be quiet with you, and write me my play."

"A beggar-woman. . . . We have Jane Shore; will that do for you?"

"No; Jane Shore is a princess; I want a woman belonging to the people, I tell you."

"I do not know how to draw such women."

"You aristocrat!"

"Come, have you a subject?"

"I know some one who has one."

"Send me that some one."

"I will."

"Who is it?"

"Anicet."

"This happens most luckily, for I owe him a play."

"How is that?"

"We did *Térésa* together, and my name appeared; we will do your *Mendiante* together, and his name shall be on it."

"Oh! it is a regular craze with you not to give your own name? *Richard! La Tour de Nesle!* You will end by only putting your name to bad dramas."

"Do you mean that in connection with *Catherine Howard?*"

"No, I said it . . . at a venture."

Some one knocked at the door.

"Good!" she continued, "here is Harel coming to worry us."

"Let us see. Come in; what do you want?"

"I bring news from M. Gaillardet."

"A second writ?"

"No, the copy of a letter which will be in all the newspapers to-morrow."

"Oh! leave us in peace!" said Georges.

"Wait then, till I have read it you."

"My dear Harel, I tell you you are disturbing us greatly."

"I do not think so!" he said.

Indeed, I was still on my knees in front of Georges.

"Listen."

He read—

"30 *May*

"*To the Editor.*

"DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I was alone named as the author of *La Tour de Nesle*, to-day my name is on the playbills, preceded by two M's, and * * *. It is an error or a piece of malice of which I will neither be the victim nor the dupe. In any case, will you please announce that, in my contract as on the stage, and as, I trust, on to-morrow's bills, I am and intend to be the sole author of *La Tour de Nesle*. F. GAILLARDET"

"There!" said I to Harel, "that is flat."

Harel unfolded a second letter.

"Here is my reply," he said.

"My dear man, the only answer you can make is to change the position of the stars."

"That does not enter into my planetary system. . . . Listen."

And he read—

"1 *June*

"*To the Editor.*

"This is my answer to the extraordinary letter from M. Gaillardet, who claims to be the sole author of *La Tour de Nesle*. The play, entirely as far as style is concerned,

and nineteen-twentieths, at least, as regards its composition, belongs to a celebrated collaborator who, for private reasons, did not wish to give his name after the immense success it received. Scarcely anything left is of the original work of M. Gaillardet. I assert this and will prove it, if need arises, by comparison of the MS. compared with that of M. Gaillardet.—Yours etc.

"HAREL"

On 2 June, the newspapers contained this reply from M. Gaillardet—

"*To the Editor.*

"By way of an answer to M. Harel, please be so good as to insert the enclosed letter, written to me by the *celebrated collaborator* of whom M. Harel speaks, which I received at Tonnerre, where I first learnt that I had a collaborator.

F. GAILLARDET"

My letter followed. I must confess the insertion of my letter surprised me. It was, to say the least, tactless on M. Gaillardet's part, for he thereby made an adversary of a man who wished to remain neutral. It was no longer possible for me to keep silent; the newspapers, always rather malevolent towards me, began to attack me, and I had had a quarrel the day before with M. Viennet of the *Corsaire* in the very office of that newspaper, which very nearly ended in a duel. Furthermore, I felt vaguely that, before this matter was ended, there would be sword-play or pistol practice to be given or received. After all the mortifications the work had cost me, I should much prefer that this should be with M. Gaillardet than with any other person. In addition to all this, since my attack of cholera, I was excessively weak. I could not eat, and I was attacked every night by feverishness, which put me into an abominable temper. So I seized my pen and, smarting under the disagreeable impression that I had just received from the publishing of my letter, I replied—

"*To the Chief Editor of the —— Newspaper.*

"SIR,—Allow me first of all to thank you for the insertion of the letter I wrote to M. Gaillardet, reproduced in your yesterday's issue. It will be a proof to the public mind of the delicacy which I desired to exercise in my dealings with this young man; but that delicacy has, it seems to me, been very ill appreciated: the only two conversations I had with him proved to me that he could not understand it.[1] But how could M. Gaillardet not be conscious that, at least, the insertion of this letter would necessitate a reply on my part, that it could only be one disadvantageous to himself, and that, hunting for ridicule with a lantern, he could not fail to be more fortunate than Diogenes? Very well, the answer which he compels me to make is as follows—

"'I have not read M. Gaillardet's MS.; it only left M. Harel's hands for a second and it was returned to him at once; for, in consenting to write a work under a title and about a known situation, I was afraid of being influenced by a work anterior to my own, and thus lose the freshness which is essential to me before I can do such a piece of work.'

"Now, since M. Gaillardet thinks the public is not sufficiently informed about this sorry business, let him convoke the arbitration of three men of letters, *of his own choice*, and come before them with his MS., while I will with mine; they shall then judge on which side is the delicacy of feeling and on which the ingratitude.

"In order that I may be faithful to the extreme limits of the conditions which I self-sacrificingly imposed upon myself in the letter I wrote to M. Gaillardet, allow me, sir, not to give my name here, any more than I have done on the bills.

"THE AUTHOR OF THE MANUSCRIPT OF
La Tour de Nesle"

Henceforth, it will be understood, war was declared between M. Gaillardet and myself.

[1] I am obliged, in order not to alter the text, to reproduce the letters in their entirety; only, I now disapprove of every wounding expression contained in mine.

CHAPTER IV

The use of friends—*Le Musée des Familles*—An article by M. Gaillardet—My reply to it—Challenge from M. Gaillardet—I accept it with effusion—My adversary demands a first respite of a week—I summon him before the Commission of Dramatic Authors—He declines that arbitration—I send him my seconds—He asks a delay of two months—Janin's letter to the newspapers

ALTHOUGH great events were gathering like a dreadful storm on the horizon, and were about to take place in the midst of the miserable controversy about which we are writing, I think it is better, as we have begun it, to follow it to the end, rather than to return to it later.

M. Gaillardet persisted in his lawsuit and won it. I have mentioned that I had completely refused to second Harel in his defence. The ill-advised stars which had stolen a march upon M. Gaillardet's name were obliged to fall behind it; but, as Harel had wished, all Paris knew that I was the real author of *La Tour de Nesle*.

Did this do the drama much good? I have my doubts about it; I have already expressed my opinion upon the pleasure the public takes in making the reputation of an unknown young man at the expense of established reputations. Two years went by, during which *La Tour de Nesle* ran its two to three hundred performances. I thought no more about the old quarrel; I had only published *Gaule et France* during those two years—a very incomplete work, from the point of view of science, but

singularly noteworthy from the point of view of the prediction with which it ends—and had *Angèle* performed, when, one morning, a friend of mine (friends are very useful sometimes, as we are about to see), came into my room when I was still in bed, and, after a few preliminary words, asked me if I had read *Le Musée des Familles*. I looked at him with an obviously astonished air.

"*Le Musée des Familles*?" I asked. "On what grounds should I have read that paper?"

"Because it contains an article by M. Gaillardet."

"So much the better for *Le Musée des Familles*."

"An article on *La Tour de Nesle*."

"Ah! an article on the drama?"

"No, on the tower."

"Well, how does that affect me?"

"Because in M. Gaillardet's article on the tower he speaks of the play."

"Well, what does he say? Come to the point."

"He says it is his best drama."

"He ought to be ashamed of himself. It is one of my best, he means."

"You ought to read it."

"What is the good?"

"Because it may perhaps have to be replied to."

"M. Gaillardet's article?"

"Yes."

"Do you think so? . . ."

"Good heavens! Read it."

I called Louis. The servant I then had was called Louis; he was a droll fellow whom I found drunk from time to time, when I returned home at night, and who gave as an excuse that as he had to fight a duel the next morning he must drown his thoughts. I hurried him away to Henry Berthoud, the publisher of *Le Musée des Familles*, with a message asking him to send me the number which contained M. Gaillardet's article. Louis returned with the required number, and this is what I read:—

"LA TOUR DE NESLE

"One evening the setting sun lit up the sky with a purple red colour, and bordered the horizon that lay between Sèvres and Saint Cloud with a ribbon of fire; I was on the Pont des Arts, with M. de Jouy's *L'Ermite* in my hand. Guided by the Academician, I had come there as an observer to the centre of a bird's-eye view; for this particular place is a focus where a thousand rays meet and converge. Opposite to me, the city, the cradle of Paris, with its houses piled up in the shape of a triangle, and as close to one another as a battle corps; at the head of the city, the Pont Neuf, with its ancient arches and its nine adjoining streets. To the left, the Louvre, which is no longer the old Louvre, with its heavy tower and belfry; the Tuileries, that royal *pied-à-terre*, whose name is ennobled with the dignity of time and of the revolutions which have passed over its head; a monument of which can be said, as Milton said of Satan: 'Lightning has struck it and marked its face!' To the right, the Mint, the sole building in Paris which, together with the Timbre-Royal and the Morgue, possess a physiognomy of their own, and, so to speak, show the nature of their existence. Below, the Institut and the Bibliothèque Mazarine.

"I had reached thus far in my *circumspection*, when my *cicerone* (I still refer to M. de Jouy) informed me, in a footnote, that at this place formerly stood the tower of Nesle, from the top of which, according to the chroniclers, several queens or princes were forced to fling themselves into the Seine, to get rid the more surely and swiftly of the misfortune they had drawn down upon themselves. I was much struck by this anecdote. When still young and at college, I had read Brantôme and what it contained about the tower of Nesle; but the recollection of it had been effaced from my memory: it now returned to me vividly and suddenly. Assuming a twofold power from the hour and the place where I stood, it returned with redoubled force and impressiveness; it completely took possession of me. . . . For the first time, I detected the drama, and my first and best drama was conceived!

"There is something both attractive and terrible in this story of debauchery and of princely slaughters, consummated in the night, at midnight, between the thick walls of a tower, with no witnesses but the burning lamps, the attendant assassins, and God watching all! Something which takes possession of the soul, in the butchery of these young men (they were all young and beautiful!) who had come there weaponless and without mistrust, . . . a truly royal quarry, which hyænas and tigers might envy! But I am letting

myself run away in these poetical reflections, and I forget that I am, and only desire to be, a story-teller.

" Let us first speak of the building, then, afterwards, I will speak of its mysteries. At the time of King Philip, the Beautiful, and his sons, the boundaries of Paris were limited, on the left bank of the Seine going down, by an enclosure made by Philippe-Auguste, who gave his name to it. That enclosure, the walls of which correspond pretty nearly to the later towers of the Louvre, had, for their outer defence, a moat which communicated with the Seine, and took the water to the Gate of Bussy. Beyond the enclosure, were the great and little pré-aux-Clercs, so called because they were used on fête days as a promenade by the students of the university. They covered the space now occupied by the rues des Petits-Augustins, Marais-Saint-Germain, Colombier, Jacob, Verneuil, de l'Université and of Saints-Pères, etc. On this space, and adjoining the enclosure, was the hôtel de Nesle, which had a façade of eleven great arcades, with a close which was planted with trees, the end of which, on the quayside, was close to the Church of the Augustines. This mansion occupied the situation of the College Mazarin, the hôtel de la Monnaie and other contiguous sites: its spacious court, its buildings and its gardens were almost bounded by the rues Mazarine and Nevers and the quai Conti, formerly called quai de Nesle.

" Amaury de Nesle, the owner of the mansion, sold it, in 1308, to Philippe le Bel for the sum of 5000 livres ; Philippe le Long gave it to Jeanne de Bourgogne, his wife, and she, in her will, ordered it to be sold, and the money applied to the foundation of a college which was called the Collége de Bourgogne. In 1381, Charles VI. sold it to his uncle, the duc de Berry. Finding the gardens too small, the latter, in 1385, added seven acres of land to them, situated outside the town moats, and, in order to establish communication, he had a bridge built over the moat. This outer portion was called the *petit séjour de Nesle*. From the hands of the Duc de Berry, the mansion passed into those of several other princes and, finally, was sold outright by Henri II. and Charles IX. in 1552 and 1570. Upon its ground various constructions rose up, such as the hôtel de Nevers, the hôtel de Guénégaud, which has since taken the name of Conti ; later again still, what remained of this mansion was pulled down to make room for the Collège Mazarin, now the Palais de l'Institut. At the western end of the mansion, in the angle made by the course of the Seine and the moat of the enclosure de Philippe-Auguste, were the gate and tower of Nesle, the only ones which were represented on the engraving placed at the head of this account. The gate was a kind of fortress comprised of a

building flanked by two round towers, between which was the entrance from the town. This was reached by a stone bridge supported on four arches, and re-establishing the communication intercepted by the moat, which was very wide at this spot.

" It appears that, for a long time, this gate had been closed to the public ; for I read letters patent of 13 April 1550, addressed to the provost and aldermen, authorising them to ' cause the gate of Nesle to be opened, for the convenience of the neighbourhood, and for foot passengers and horses only, not for the use of waggons or pack horses subject to the payment of toll.' I further read in these letters that ' the faubourg had been ruined by the wars, and reduced to arable land ; and, having begun to be rebuilt under François I., who had allowed it to be done, it was one of the finest suburbs of any of the towns of France. Whereupon, request being made by the town, the opening of the said gate is allowed.'[1]

" It was by this gate of Nesle that Henri IV. entered Paris, after having besieged that side of the city, in 1589. It was still in existence under the reign of Louis XIV. Now as to the tower ; it was situated some few feet to the north of the gate, on the point of land which was formed by the moat where it reunited itself to the Seine : the river bathing it at its foot. It was round in shape, was about a hundred and twenty feet in height, and overlooked the roof of the gallery of the Louvre. It was yoked to a second tower containing the spiral staircase, and was not so large in diameter, but still higher. At first sight, one would have said they were like two sisters, one of whom had the heritage of the strength and the maturity of age, and the other the lightness and graces of youth. More pointed and slender, this tower was the look-out one ; more *solid* and *staid*, the former trusted to its strength and waited. Both were joined to the neighbouring gate by a wall, their ally, these three forming a complete whole, which faced south-west, and was continued by ramparts which, together with several other works, completed the defence.

" On the other bank, opposite these, rose the Louvre, and, in the angle between the Louvre and the Wall of Paris, was a tower similar to them, which they called the *tour du Coin*. In times of danger, an iron chain, one end of which was fixed to the *tour de Nesle*, stretched across the Seine, and, held up at various distances by boats, was fastened to the *tour du Coin*, and barred from that side of the river the entrance from the city of Paris.

" Originally, the door and gate of Nesle bore the name of Philippe

[1] *Histoire de Paris*, by Félibien, vol. iii. of the proofs, p. 378, Collect. B.

Hamelin, their builder or their first owner, I do not know which. Later, they derived their name from the mansion, which had become important. The windows of the tower and one terrace of the mansion looked over the river.

"Brantôme (I now return to him), in the second paragraph, art. 1er of his *Femmes Galantes*, relates that a Queen of France, whom he does not name, ordinarily lived there, 'who was on the watch there for passers-by, calling out to them and making them come to her; and throwing them from the top of the tower, *which still stands*, to the water below to drown them. . . . I do not wish to say, he adds, that this was true; but the common people, the greater portion of Paris, at least, declare this; and no man so simple but who, if you showed him the tower alone, and questioned him concerning it, would say it was so.'

"Jean Second, a Dutch poet, who died in 1536, supported Brantôme's assertion in a piece of Latin verse which he composed about the tower of Nesle.[1]

"Mayerne mentions it in his *History of Spain*, vol. 1, p. 560. Villon, who wrote his poems in the fifteenth century, at a still nearer date to the event, adds his testimony to it. Giving several new details, he informs us that the wretched victims were shut into sacks before being flung into the river. In the second strophe of his *Ballade des Dames du temps jadis*, he asks—

" . . . Où la royne
Qui commanda que Buridan
Fût jeté, en ung sac, en Seine?"

This Buridan, of whom Villon speaks, escaped from the trap, we know not how. He retired to Vienna, in Austria, where he founded a university, and his name became famous in the schools of Paris in the fifteenth century.

"In 1471, a Master of Arts of the University of Leipzig wrote a small work entitled *Commentaire historique sur les jeunes écoliers parisiens que Buridan*, etc. It will be seen that the story of the tower of Nesle had become of European fame. The queen, of whom Brantôme, Jean Second, Mayerne and Villon, all speak, was taken to be, successively, Jeanne de Navarre, wife of Philippe le Bel; next, Marguerite de Bourgogne, first wife of Louis x., as well as his two sisters, Jeanne and Blanche, all three daughters-in-law of Philippe le Bel.

But Robert Gaguin, a historian of the fifteenth century, comes forward in defence of Jeanne de Navarre. After speaking of the conduct of the three princesses, wives of the three sons of Philippe

[1] "Epigramm, libro," p. 140. edit. Lugd. Batav.

le Bel and of their punishment, he adds: 'These disorders and their frightful consequences gave birth to a tradition injurious to the memory of Jeanne de Navarre, wife of Philippe le Bel. According to that tradition, she caused students whom she attracted to her to be thrown into the river from the window of her room. Only one single student, Jean Buridan, had the good luck to escape the penalty he had incurred; this is why he published this epigram (before his self-exilement): *Ne craignez pas de tuer une royne; cela est quelquefois bon* (Reginam interficere nolite timere; bonum est).'

"Thus, Gaguin does not contest the fact; on the contrary, he confirms it and develops it, only complaining—and not without reason—that it was attributed to Jeanne de Navarre, who did not live at the same time as Buridan. As regards Margaret of Burgundy and her sisters Jeanne and Blanche, they have not the safeguard or the protection of a date, nor of the verdict of history. All the world knows, on the other hand, that the three sisters were in other ways guilty of the most scandalous conduct; two of them had their two brothers, Philippe and Gaultier d'Aulnay as their lovers; the tower of Nesle then belonged to the Princess Jeanne, and was their meeting-place. But, one day, says Geoffrey of Paris—

"'Tout chant et baudor et leesce
Tornés furent à grand destrèce,
Du cas qui lors en France avint:
Dont escorcher il eu convint,
Deux chevaliers joli et gaie,
Gaultier et Philippe d'Aulnay.'

"In fact, these two young men were suddenly arrested as well as the queen and her sisters, the princesses. Philippe confessed that he was the lover of Margaret, wife of Louis x., and Gaultier that of Blanche, Comtesse de la Marche. This confession made, says Geoffrey—

"'L'eure ne fut pas moult retraite
Que donnée fut la sentence;
Si furent jugiés sans doutance
Les deux chevaliers de leur *paire*.
D'une sentence si amère
Por leur traison et péchié,
Que ils furent escorchié,
. . . . . .
Et puis entrainé et pendu!'

boats
the riv
"Or

[1] Margaret and Blanche were taken to the Andelys, where they Collect. lung, says Geoffrey, into a kind of underground dungeon.

" 'Longuement en prison là furent,
Et de confort moult petit urent.
L'une ne l'autre ni ot aise ;
Mais toutes voies plus à mal aise
Fut la royne de Navarre,
En haut estoit ; et à la terre
La comtesse fut plus aval,
Dont elle souffroit moins de mal,
Car elle estoit plus chaudement.
Ce fut justice voirement,
Car la royne cause estoit,
Du péché que elle avoit fait.'

" From this prison they were transferred to the Château-Gaillard, a Normandy fortress. There, by order of Louis x., Margaret was strangled with a towel, according to some, and with her own hair, according to others. Blanche was spared and divorced, and took the veil at the Abbey of Maubisson, where she ended her life. But Jeanne was even more fortunate ; she had been arrested, like her sisters—

" 'Et, quand la comtesse ce vit,
Hautement s'écria et dit :
Por Dieu, oiez moi, sire Roi ;
Qui est qui parle contre moi ?
Je dis que je suis preude fame,
Sans nul crisme, sans nul diffame ;
Et sé nul ne veut contre dire,
Gentil Roy, je vous réquier, Sire,
Que vous m'oiez en deffendant
Sé nul ou nulle demandant
Me fait chose de mauvestie,
Mon cuer sens si pur, si traitie,
Que bonnement me deffendrai,
Ou tel champion baillerai,
Qui bien saura mon droit deffendre,
S'il ovus ples à mon gage prendre.'

She succeeded, indeed, in justifying herself more or less, and her husband Philippe le Long took her back again.

" Frédérick Gaillardet "

There was nothing in all this particularly offensive to me ; but I had been so greatly annoyed over the whole business, that I had promised myself, on the very first opportunity that presented itself, to be disagreeable to

M. Gaillardet, and I did not intend to let this opportunity slip by. The occasion appeared and I seized it. I wrote, *ab irato*, the following letter, and I did wrong. I cannot do more than confess it, I hope.

"TO M. S.—HENRY BERTHOUD

"MONSIEUR LE DIRECTEUR,—In turning over one of your back numbers, I chanced upon an article in which M. Gaillardet relates how he wrote his drama of *La Tour de Nesle*. I should never have believed that such details were of sufficiently lively an interest to the public; but, as M. Gaillardet thinks otherwise, I will submit to his opinion, and I will relate, in my turn, how I wrote mine.

"I must first of all admit that its birth or, rather, its incarnation, its earliest idea, dawned on my mind in a less sudden and inspired and, consequently, less poetical, a manner than in his case. It did not strike me on the Pont des Arts, towards the evening of a beautiful summer day, at that hour when the ray of the western sun purples the horizon of the great city; it did not come to me, indeed, while I was gazing at the Mazarin Palace, vulgarly known as the Institut. That is why my *Tour de Nesle* is so unacademic. No; but you will, perhaps, recollect the disastrous time when the cholera leapt from St. Petersburg to London, and from London to Paris, and fell upon the Hôtel-Dieu, spreading its wings over the doomed city like a black pall. The rich man in his selfishness, first of all, hoped that the plague-laden breath of this demon would restrict itself to a mortality among the poor; that the aristocratic scourge would only decimate the dwellers in lodgings or garrets, and that it would think twice before it knocked with its trailing shroud at the doors of the mansions of the opulent Chaussée or the noble Faubourg. He thought it had gone mad! He shut the padded shutters of his windows so that no sound should reach him; he ordered his valets to light fresh candles, to bring in more bottles of wine, to sing more songs. Then, at the close of the orgy, he heard the shout at his door:—It was the Asiatic angel come, like the Commander after Don Juan's feast, to seize him by the hair, saying: 'Repent thee and die!'

"Oh! then there was universal desolation, indeed! and it was curious to see how the rumour of the first cry of death from a rich household went resounding through the faubourg Saint-Honoré to the Luxembourg, and from the Luxembourg to la Nouvelle-Athènes; Suddenly, all who lived encircled within that elegant triangle stirred by a growing terror, and thought of nothing but flight, themselves in their carriages emblazoned with the arms of

Collect. I

Crécy, of Marengo or of the Bourse. More than one of these carriages, before it reached the end of the street, came into collision with a waggon covered with black on its way to the cemetery, and more than one fugitive met Death, the incorruptible Customs' officer, who forbade him to go beyond the frontier, recognising him as his, and having marked him for the tomb beforehand.

"Then, to the noise of these barouches, berlins and post-chaises, which increased in every direction, and tore along the roads, there succeeded a dull and continuous sound. A long file of hearses of all descriptions, from a simple black curtain converted into one (for these funeral equipages were soon insufficient for the number of guests invited), followed incessantly, at a walking pace, in a triple line, and before them yawned the jaws of a cemetery. Then, by another route, the carriages returned, empty and impatient to be refilled. All things disappear before the incessant fear of death: the Bourse was mute; the walks became solitary; the places of entertainment deserted; the theatre Porte-Saint-Martin, that king of money-makers, took 9000 francs only during the whole month of April.

"One of the bomb-shells which had burst over Paris struck me. I was still laid on my bed, feverish, but convalescent when M. Harel came and sat by my bedside. The disease from which his theatre was suffering was following the reverse course from mine. M. Harel is one of those gladiators who, if not the strongest, are, at least, the most agile I know: a man of calculated cool-headedness, clever by nature, eloquent from necessity. For five years, I believe, fortune and he wrestled with one another and struggled in the lists that go by the name of the pit of a theatre; certainly, more than once, he bit the dust, but, more than once, he also floored his adversary and, each time the thing happened, the goddess did not rise except with empty pockets. Nevertheless, this time, he himself confessed she had her dagger at his throat!

"With a man like M. Harel, circumstances may change from ill to good, and from good to ill ten times in one day; but, in either case, it is always a pleasure to see him because he is always amusing to listen to: Give him Mascarille and Figaro for *valets de chambre* and, if he does not get the better of them, I wish I may be a Georges Dandin. It was, then, with the usual pleasure which his presence gave me, no matter, as I have previously said, what the position I might be in with respect to him, that I saw M. Harel come in. This time, moreover, I thought we were on friendly terms, and his visit was a real bit of good luck to a convalescent. He recounted to me, in the wittiest manner imaginable, all the tribulations the theatre was undergoing, enough to drive an ordinary man mad, and ended

by saying that if my brains were as empty at that moment as his theatre he was a ruined man.

" An author's head is rarely quite dried up; he has always, in one of the drawers of that marvellous piece of furniture which we call the brain, two or three ideas which are awaiting the period of incubation necessary for each of them before they can come forth alive. Unfortunately, or, perhaps, fortunately, none of these ideas was, at the moment, ready to be born from me, and they each needed several more months of gestation unless they were to come forth into the world still-born. M. Harel gave me a week.

" There are two ways of working at literary work as a whole and dramatic work in particular: one is conscientious, the other pecuniary; the first artistic, the second bourgeois. In the first method, one works thinking only of oneself; in the second, thinking only of the public, and the great evil of our profession is that it is very often the pecuniary work which prevails over the conscientious, and the bourgeois upholding itself over the artistic scheme. Which means that, when one works for oneself, one sacrifices all public requirements to personal, whilst, if one works for others, one sacrifices all personal demands to public; and this does not prevent, whatever their fate, an author having works to which he is indifferent and those for which he has a predilection. Now, it is useless to say that works of predilection are not created in a week. I stuck to it, then, not to give up any of the ideas I had in my head at that moment; and, M. Harel seeing this, he incontinently mentioned one of those which he had in his MSS. boxes at his theatre.

" ' *Pardieu!* ' he said to me, ' there is in one of the three or four hundred dramas received at the Porte-Saint-Martin a subject which would suit your style of work admirably, and in which Mademoiselle Georges would have a fine part.'

" ' What is it? '

" ' A Margaret of Burgundy.'

" ' I cannot take it: I refused to deal with it the other day when some one suggested it to me.' [1]

" ' But why? '

" ' Because a friend of mine, who, I think, has much more cleverness than you, which is saying a good deal, is doing a drama on it.'

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[1] " In fact, Fourcade, one of my best friends, son of the Consul-General of that name, had come a few days previously to make me this offer. It will not be surprising, I think, in a letter of this kind, that I mention every one by name; for a name written out plainly saves me testimonials and certificates."

" ' Who is he ? '

" ' Roger de Beauvoir ? '

" ' You are mistaken ! It is a novel entitled, *L'Écolier de Cluny*.'

" ' Oh ! then another difficulty is removed ! I am all the more pleased to plunge into the stream of the fourteenth century at the time when cholera has come to pay me a call, for I know my Louis le Hutin to my finger-tips.'

" ' So it is understood I send you the MS. to-morrow.'

" ' But the author ! Will it suit his ideas ? '

" ' The play belongs to me ; mine by fair and square contract : I have the right to have it rewritten at my own pleasure, by whomsoever I think fit. And, believe me, I feel sure the author will prefer that you should touch it up rather than any one else. . . . Besides, let me tell you everything frankly.'

" ' I warn you that, after that declaration, I shall be on my guard ! '

" ' Exactly so. . . . You know Janin is rather friendly towards me ? '

" ' Yes.'

" ' Very well, I begged him to rewrite this play, as it is unactable as it is, and I only took it after he had consented to overhaul it . . .'

" ' Then you do not need me ? '

" ' On the contrary, for it was Janin himself who told me to come to you. He has toiled and moiled at it ; he has put marvellous style into it ; [1] but, finally, he was the first to realise that there was no play in what he had done. This morning, he came into my room with an armful of papers, which he flung at me, telling me that you were the only one who could put it into shape, that I should kill him with worry, that he had the cholera and that he was going to apply a score of leeches.'

" ' Very well, send me all these old papers to-morrow ? '

" ' Will you set at it immediately ? '

" ' I will try ; but on one condition.'

" ' What is it ? '

" ' That I shall not appear at the rehearsals, and that my name shall not figure on the bills ; because I am doing this for you and not for myself. So give me your word of honour ? '

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[1] " I have Janin's MS. in my possession ; it is, indeed, perhaps the work on which he best displayed the wealth and flamboyant versatility of his pen. This is so true, that when my drama was done I made use of his work as the gold dust with which to besprinkle my own."

"'My word of honour!'

"I have already mentioned that, at the time M. Harel came to hunt me up, I was suffering from fever, a state of mind, as every one knows, extremely favourable to the concoction of works of the imagination. Therefore, the very same day, my character of Margaret of Burgundy was decided upon, my rôle of Buridan drawn out and part of the plot contrived. Next day M. Harel arrived with his manuscript.

"'Here the thing is,' he said.

"'What a pity! it comes too late.'

"'How is that?'

"'Your drama is finished.'

"'Bah!'

"'Send me your secretary to-night; he shall have the first scene.'

"'Ah! my dear friend! You are . . .'

"'One moment! Let us concern ourselves with business matters now.'

"'But you know that, between us . . .'

"'Ah! it is not of my own I wish to speak; it is of those of your young man. . . . You have made the young man sign a contract, you told me?'

"'Yes.'

"'On what conditions?'

"'Why, according to the usual Porte-Saint-Martin terms: 2 louis per performance, 1 for himself, 1 for Janin, and 12 francs' worth of tickets.[1]

"'As Janin renounced his part in the collaboration, does he give up his rights?'

"'There is no doubt on that head; he was the first to say so to me.'

"'Then, your young man enjoys the benefit of Janin's withdrawal, and has the treaty entirely to himself?'

"'Nothing of the kind!'

"'Why?'

"'Because, with your rights, which are in addition to the ordinary arrangements, that would cost me a ruinous sum per night. Besides, he only claims one louis; he expects to have a collaborator: he will get his louis and his collaborator; only, the latter, instead of being named Janin, will be called Dumas, and, instead of being named, will not hear of it.'

"'Yes; but I would like this young man to be satisfied with me, all the same.'

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[1] This treaty is still in the possession of M. Harel.

" ' There is a way; let him deduct his second louis from your rights.'

" ' Yes, but then, you, on your side, will take the sum of 20 francs' worth of tickets ; that will make even money for him.'

" ' I am anxious it should.'

" ' Do you agree to that ? '

" ' Perfectly.'

" ' Let us draw it up.'

" I took up pen and paper and the treaty was drawn up and signed.

" ' Is there anything besides to take over in what you have brought there ? ' I continued, pointing to the manuscript lying on my bed.

" ' Why, yes, in the first act . . . Understand clearly that this MS. is Janin's ; I have not brought you the other, which is illegible.'

" ' I will see that after I have written mine.'

" ' Then I shall have something to-night ? '

" ' Yes, the first scene.'

" ' That is well ; Verteuil shall be with you at ten o'clock.' [1]

" I spent the day scratching the nib of a pen on paper. Verteuil came that night at the appointed hour ; I was dead tired, but the scene was done ; it was the tavern scene.

" ' At what time must I return ? ' said Verteuil to me.

" ' To-morrow, at four.'

" ' And shall I have the second scene ? '

" ' You shall have it.'

" ' Wonderful ! . . .'

" ' Only, leave me in peace.'

" ' I will take myself off at once.'

" Verteuil took his leave. I then remembered what M. Harel had said to me of the beauties of style, which, according to him, existed in the beginning of the work. The first thing I caught sight of, on looking at the names of the characters, was that the principal hero was called *Anatole*, a name which seemed to me singularly modern for a fourteenth century drama ; but I went on with my reading undiscouraged. There was a suggestion of plot, of which I took advantage, and, as I have said, admirable things in the way of style. However, I only took the tirade of the *grandes dames*. Thus, it is at Janin, and not at me, that the marquises of the faubourg Saint-Germain ought to throw stones. As far as the second, third, fourth and fifth acts were concerned, they diverged so greatly from ordinary theatrical rules, that it was impossible to extract anything from them ; nevertheless, the magic of the style

[1] Verteuil is M. Harel's secretary.

made me read them right to the end ; but, when I had read the manuscript, I laid it down and did not open it again.

" Next day, Verteuil was prompt and I was punctual, and he carried off his second scene. When the first three acts were done, they were read to the actors without waiting for the last two. According to our compact, my name was not uttered, I never appeared at the reading, and M. Harel took the place of the presumed author, who was still absent from Paris.

" In a week's time, M. Harel had his drama completely finished. I then wrote to the young man to tell him that his first performance was going to take place. He never favoured me with an answer ; but took carriage, came to Paris and found his rehearsal tickets at his rooms. He rushed to the Porte-Saint-Martin, came in as they began the second act, listened to it quite quietly, also to the third ; but, at last, losing patience after the prison scene, he came up on to the stage and asked if they were soon going to begin the rehearsal of his play, or if they had made him come solely and simply to listen to somebody else's drama. The actors began to laugh. The resemblance in the names suddenly occurred to his mind, and he saw clearly that he had said a foolish thing.

" ' What,' said Bocage to him, ' do you not recognise your child, or has it been changed at nurse ? '

" The young man did not know what to reply.

" ' Are you dissatisfied with the prison scene ? ' continued Bocage.

" ' Not at all,' said the young man, who began to regain his self-possession ; ' on the contrary, it seems to me very effective.'

" ' Very well, but you shall see your second act,' resumed Bocage ; ' that will please you indeed ! '

" The young man saw his second act, and declared it to be exactly to his taste. Only, he seemed much to regret that the name of Anatole had been exchanged for that of Gaultier d'Aulnay.

" The young man followed the rehearsals of *his drama* most carefully, making objections at random to which nobody listened, and corrections which they took good care not to follow.

" The day of the representation arrived. Carefully though I had kept the secret on my side, the indiscreet interest of the manager, the jokes of the actors, even the complaints let slip as to the *author*, had denounced me to the public as the real culprit ; a certain way of handling, in the construction of the play, and qualities of style impressed with an individual stamp of its own, at each moment rose up to accuse me more and more ; in short, there was not one single person in the theatre but who expected to hear my name pronounced by the lips of Bocage, when he came to announce,

according to custom, that the play they had had the honour of performing was by Monsieur * * * He named the young man.

"I had just fulfilled the last engagement that I had set myself, and, certainly, it was the most difficult. To hear a whole theatre stamping, applauding with hundreds of hands, demanding with the frenzy of triumph your name as the author, which is equivalent to your person, your life and your renown, and to give up instead of your own an unknown name to the halo of publicity; and all this when one might have done otherwise, since no sort of promise binds you, since no engagement whatever has been entered into, this is, believe me, the philosophy of delicacy pushed to the extremest limit.[1]

"When the performance was over, I caught sight of our young man as I was going downstairs with the audience. He modestly received the compliments of all his friends and was riding the high horse in the centre of a group of them. Janin was going down at the same time as I. We exchanged one of those looks which nobody could understand; then we went away arm in arm, laughing all along the boulevard, at the young man, at the public and, most of all, at ourselves. Next day, M. Harel, who made out that the absence of my name on the bills was prejudicial to him, invented one of those methods which were peculiar to himself, of telling the public, tacitly, what it was impossible to tell it outright, and he drew up his bill in these terms—

"LA TOUR DE NESLE

"*Drame en cinq actes, en prose*

"DE MM. * * * ET GAILLARDET

"He had, as we see, reversed the rules of algebra, which lay down that one should proceed from the known to the unknown, and not from the unknown to the known. It was impossible to give proof, I think, of a more knowing ignorance and of a more ingenious blunder. Which seeing, the young man wrote the following letter to the editor of the *Corsaire*. . . ."

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[1] "This had already happened to me in *Richard*; but, this time, it was not the voice of my *amour propre* which compelled me to restrain myself, but the entreaties of my collaborator. Ten times during the performance, Dinaux and M. Harel came into my box to beg me with growing solicitations as the drama increased in popularity to give out my name. They have not forgotten the firmness of my refusal, I believe; but neither shall I forget the friendly delicacy of their entreaties."

We are acquainted with that letter as well as with Harel's answer : I have quoted them previously.

"That answer did not hinder the young man, who was a barrister, from bringing an action against M. Harel, but it was a singular action, as you shall see. He never dreamt of taking the asterisks from the bill altogether ; it was a question, therefore, solely, of changing the position of them. A request was, consequently, presented by the young man to the Tribunal de Commerce, to have the things re-established in algebraical position ; this request asked for a decree which should authorise the young man to put himself first. Until then all went well, and the young man had not completely forgotten the small service I had just done him, and the way in which I had done it ; witness the following letter which he had written me when starting his lawsuit—

"' My dear Master,—I wish to renew my thanks for your good and loyal conduct in my affairs yesterday ; but, since Harel is intractable, I will not yield him an inch of ground, and I am going to fight him. If, indeed, as he says, the honour of his management is imperilled, so is my word compromised ; and *I am too far pledged with the public and with my friends to remain quiet.*

"' Do not let this business worry you, my dear master, and particularly do not let it prevent you from going away when you wish ; only, in that case, I would ask you of your goodness to make one trivial declaration,[1] so that Harel may be brought to trial, and made to overcome his obstinacy by the certain prospect of a conviction against him. A thousand pardons for all the upset these miserable, wretched quarrels are causing you. A thousand cordial thanks.

"'4 *June* 1832'

"Owing to my declaration, the sentence was pronounced and the unlucky asterisks were condemned to be put last. Meanwhile, a singular idea had presented itself to the young man : namely, to sell the MS. without my knowledge. Consequently, he went in search of Duvernoy and told him that he was the author of *La Tour de Nesle*, and that he had come to do business with him.

"Duvernoy, who knew how things had been going, came in search of me, and warned me of the action of my *collaborator*. We settled there and then the conditions of the sale. It was fixed

[1] "The object of that declaration was to make it known that I resigned being put first, and that I had never solicited that position."

at 1400 francs, 700 of which were to be handed to the young man. Doubtless, this sum did not appear to the young man proportionate to the merit of *his drama*; for he threatened Duvernoy and me with a second lawsuit if we fixed the basis of terms on these conditions. At the end of a fortnight he signed a contract of sale for a sum total of 500 francs. The young man would have done better, you see, to go on letting me look after his business affairs. It is needless to say that only one single name appeared on the pamphlet, as was the case on the bills. You will, perhaps, think that in consideration of this last deed of division my young man held me discharged?

"At the time I was occupied with the publication of my complete works I received a letter from him. What do you think he told me in that letter? He told me that he had just learnt with the greatest surprise that I had the presumption to put *his drama* amongst mine. As one sees, the matter had degenerated into buffoonery. I replied to the young man that, if he continued to bother me with his nonsense, I should print his manuscript in the preface of my own. This intimation was a genuine thunderbolt to the poor devil. He did not know that M. Harel had made me a present, as a kind of premium, of the autograph MS. after the signing of my agreement for *Angèle*.

"Next day I received, by a sheriff's officer, an invitation to place my manuscript in its author's hands, because, he said, he had just negotiated its *sale*. The thing will at first appear odd, but it will be understood, when one reflects that, with the exception of one scene, the drama was entirely unrevised; the publisher, then, could not have been in his right senses, but the author was well within his rights.

"M. Philippe Dupin, to whom I sent both the MSS., and who still has them in his possession, replied to our adversary that we were ready to surrender the said autograph, but that we would only do so in exchange for a copy collated under the inspection of three dramatic authors and certified conformable to them. The young man reflected for a fortnight, then withdrew his demand. This was the third lawsuit he had begun against me, in order to gain for himself 12,000 francs. Since that time I have heard no further mention of the young man, and I do not at the present day know if he be dead or alive. That is how my *Tour de Nesle* was composed. As for M. Gaillardet's, I am not aware if it is, as he says, his best drama; I still only know it from reading it, and I shall wait until he has it played before deciding if it be better than *George* and *Struensée*.—Faithfully, etc.,

"ALEX. DUMAS"

The days rolled by, and I knew that my future adversary went shooting every morning, and I was kept informed of the progress which he made. Finally, appeared the famous answer. Let me be permitted to reproduce it in full, with the insults it contains. It is probable that M. Gaillardet to-day regrets his insults towards me, as I regret my violence towards him.[1]

"TO M. S.—HENRY BERTHOUD

"MONSIEUR LE DIRECTEUR,—I published an article in the twenty-first number of *Le Musée des Familles* which you did me the honour to ask from me on the ancient tower of Nesle. In that article, I related cursorily, and under the form of a chat without any sort of pretension, how the idea had come to me to write a drama, the first conception of which no one has contested with me; a drama printed and published over two years ago, and performed to-day for the two hundredth time under my name, by the consent of M. Dumas himself. I did not say a word of M. Dumas; I did not make any allusion to the judicial and literary discussion which arose formerly between him and me. Anyone can be convinced of this by reading my article. I should have a scruple, indeed, against reviving a quarrel long since extinguished, and to which an amicable transaction put an end; a transaction proposed by M. Dumas himself, as I shall tell in due course, by which the public controversy that I had then desired and provoked was settled in its earliest stages. However that may be, to-day M. Dumas returns to the affair; he rekindles the cold and scattered ashes, piling them up with his hands and stirring them to life with his breath, and relights the fire, at the risk of burning his own fingers at it. Since he has thrown down the glove, I pick it up. He has incited me, I reply to him. So much the worse for him if he be wounded in this game, if his reputation chances to be compromised thereby: it does not rest with me to avoid the fight. . . . I am the offended, the insulted one! and, if ever retaliation be permissible, it is to him who has not sought the attack. . . . To such an one, vengeance is sacred and reprisals holy, he employs the right of natural and legitimate defence!

"I come, then, to the *complete and true story of La Tour de Nesle.* I will base my recital on proofs *written and signed* by the actual personages in this story, and, when proofs shall fail me, I will put before the readers' eyes the suppositions and probabilities of the case, and say to him: 'Consider and judge!' But, in a lawsuit

[1] See Appendix.

like this, where *honour* is everything, where the written proof of many of the general facts cannot be set forth (for that, the future would need to have been foreseen and divined as to what would happen), where each of the litigants in certain circumstances must be *believed*, because he has always told the truth in others, where he who has once lied, on the contrary, is no more worthy of credence; in an affair, in fact, where good faith ought to prevail over lying, when both have nothing to show beyond *their word*,—I must, and I will, before all else, convince my adversary of *inaccuracy* (I will be polite in expression), and, that *inaccuracy* proved, I will bind it on his forehead like the inscription of a brand at the head of a standard, so that the stigma may survive and hover incessantly over the guilty one, before the eyes of the judges in this suit.

"M. Dumas declares (I begin with the first sentence of his article relative to *La Tour de Nesle*), that, having received a visit from M. Harel, the latter said to him, 'The play belongs to me; mine by fair and square contract; I have the right to have it rewritten at my own pleasure, by whomsoever I think fit. . . .' And, further: 'You have made the young man sign a contract, you told me?' 'Yes.' 'On what conditions?' 'Why, according to the usual terms of the Porte-Saint-Martin: 2 louis per performance, 1 for himself, 1 for Janin and 12 francs' worth of tickets.' Then, in a note, M. Dumas adds: 'This treaty is still in the possession of M. Harel.' Very well, the more words the more *inaccuracies*. Here is the only treaty which ever existed between me and M. Harel; it is the one they made me sign, by what manœuvre I will tell later, when they made me accept the collaboration of M. Janin."

Then followed the text of that treaty, which the reader knows.

"'The drama was played,' says M. Dumas; 'they gave the name of the *young man*. (M. Dumas has throughout used *that expression* to designate me.) To hear a whole theatre clapping, demanding your name and, instead of one's own, an unknown name given up to the halo of publicity; and all this *when one might have done otherwise, since no sort of promise binds you, since no engagement whatever has been entered into*, this is the philosophy of delicacy pushed to the extremest limit.'

"Well, here is the letter I received from M. Dumas before the performance, and the *conditions* on which alone I consented to allow the play to be acted."

That letter, the first that I wrote to M. Gaillardet, will not have been forgotten.

"Now, reader, decide. In the case of M. Dumas, which holds its head highest, the *philosophy* of delicacy, or, indeed, that of *assurance*? 'Duvernoy came in search of me,' continues M. Dumas, 'and we *settled* there and then the conditions of the sale. It was *fixed* at 1400 francs, 700 of which were to be handed to the *young man*. Doubtless this sum did not appear to the *young man* proportionate to the merit of his drama. . . . In a fortnight's time, he signed a contract of sale for a sum total of 500 francs. The *young man* would have done better, you see, to go on letting me look after his business affairs.'

"Here is a declaration signed by M. Duvernoy.

"'By the same impartial spirit which made me give a declaration to M. Alexandre Dumas in which I acknowledged that M. Gaillardet had offered me the MS. of *La Tour de Nesle* (we shall see this later), I assert that *there was never any question* of 1400 francs for the price of the said MS., but of a sum which, I believe, was to be 1000 francs. DUVERNOY

"'PARIS, 8 *Septembre* 1834'

"I have much more to say and all the *philosophies* to quote! but they will find room in my narrative; for, now, yes,—now, I feel myself quite strong enough to undertake them!

"It was on 27 March that I read my drama *La Tour de Nesle* to M. Harel in the presence of M. Janin and of Mademoiselle Georges. The drama was received. 'Dumas could not have done better!' exclaimed the manager, enthusiastically. 'There is, however, something to touch up in the style, which is not at all dramatic; but do not worry yourself about that; begin another drama, and Janin will do us both the favour of revising some pages.' I did not quite comprehend how M. Janin, who had never written a play, could have a dramatic style, to use the manager's expression. 'But, if he has not written one,' I said to myself, 'he has heard a great many, which, perhaps, comes to the same thing.'

"I therefore professed that I should be extremely flattered and most grateful if M. Janin would indeed *smooth down* a few sentences. M. Janin consented with ready willingness, and I left M. Janin and Mademoiselle Georges joyfully. I was in the seventh heaven. . . . My rapture did not last long.

"Two days later, 29 March, I went to see what my *Janinised* drama had become. What was my surprise to see a whole act *re-written*! 'It is a big piece of work,' I said aside to the manager. 'M. Janin did much more than I had desired; but I do not think my style so bad that he need . . .' 'No, no, certainly,' replied M. Harel; 'but Janin has thrown himself thoroughly into it, he will at least

want his share.' 'What! his share?' 'Yes, his half.' 'But it is a collaboration then?—there is some *misunderstanding*; I will go and tell M. Janin.' 'Ah! what are you going to do? You will offend Janin, Janin the most influential of the critics! You will make an enemy for life.' 'Bah!' 'I tell you it is so. You do not know what the theatre is! But . . . besides they have set to work on it! It is not intact. You are bound on both sides! etc., etc.,' to such an extent that M. Harel, seeing me quite stunned, took a sheet of paper, scrawled upon it the agreement that I have transcribed above, and made me sign it. . . . And that is how I got my first collaborator.

"Then, I attributed that occurrence to a misunderstanding; now, I attribute it to a *very good understanding*: ideas change with time!

"Then the day came for M. Janin to read us his work. I said nothing, for, as far as I can, I exercise charity, even towards my enemies! . . . Let it be known only that, by common accord, the work was judged null and void. Janin withdrew and gave up the task (I will give the written proof), and M. Harel returned purely and simply to my drama. Now, since the day upon which I read my play, I had conceived new ideas and improvements, due as much to discussion and to the criticisms of the manager as to my own reflections. But, in order to enlighten the public as to the true mysteries of the birth of *La Tour de Nesle*, and, as it were, to initiate it into the phases and developments of the work by which this drama was conceived, abnormal in its success and by reason of the quarrels which it raised, I am about to establish succinctly what the drama was, *as a whole*, and in comparison with the drama performed, which I read to M. Harel, and which was returned to me at the epoch of which I am speaking. It will be easy to all to understand me at once (who has not seen *La Tour de Nesle*?), and to *verify* me afterwards, M. Dumas having the original MS. in his possession, and able to show it to whomsoever desires to see it; also, people may be confident that I shall say *less* rather than *more*. I quote from memory and my adversary has the book!"

Here, M. Gaillardet gave the résumé of his first MS.; then he continued thus—

"The reader has already gathered at what points the *two* dramas coincide. Are not these points, in the small portion I have quoted, and quoted faithfully (for if I were the man to make up an audacious lie, my adversary would hold in his hands the means of exposing me!)—are not *those points already* the fundamental basis of the *acted* drama? Are they not the bones and marrow, the substance

and framework? . . . Indeed! I venture to say that had I done *only that* in the play, I should have done more than half the drama, consequently ten, twenty times more than M. Dumas allows me, since he allows me *nothing*. *Very well!* he has dared to write and to print it in all his letters! But, after what we know of him, of what can we and should we be surprised?

"M. Harel had expressed much regret to me; first, because the drama was not *en tableaux*; that style suited the ways of his theatre better, and the success of *Richard* supported the opinion; secondly, that I had not made Buridan the father of Gaultier and of Philippe, whose mother (Marguerite) was alone known. 'That would complicate the plot,' he said to me. Finally, he thought it improbable that Marguerite, a queen and all-powerful, would not have had Buridan arrested and got rid of, at the first words of his revelation. At the juxtaposition of these two latter objections a sudden ray of light sprang up in me. Let Buridan be the *father* indeed, by means of a pre-existing intrigue, and let him be arrested by Marguerite, who wanted to rid herself of him; then, at the moment of his greatest peril, let him make himself known, and there would be the opportunity for a magnificent scene—capital! The prison scene was hit upon.

"Two days after that on which Janin had given up the drama, like an athlete, exhausted by a task too heavy for him, I took to M. Harel, the manager of the Porte-Saint-Martin, a *scenario* which was pretty nearly that of *La Tour de Nesle*. I am, however, going to point out the differences.

"Orsini was not a tavern-keeper; that was Landry, although both were men belonging to the tower of Nesle. As for Orsini, he was one of those magicians extremely feared in his time under the name of *envoûteurs*. A confidant of Marguerite, he receives at his house the courtiers, a part very much like that of Ruggieri in *Henri III.*; it is on that account, I think, that M. Dumas has made him a tavern-keeper instead of Landry.

"Secondly, the prison scene was arranged like this so that Buridan might finish his part holding Marguerite's hands, and say to her, 'Délie ces cordes!' Marguerite, falling on her knees obediently, and freeing him with *one single cut*. M. Dumas has *tripled* that action by causing Buridan only to be unbound after *three attempts*.

"He is miles beyond me, as tried talent far exceeds feeble inexperienced effort, as attainment exceeds inexperience.

"As far as the truth of what I advance is concerned, it will be detected by all impartial readers, first, in the accuracy and faithfulness of its details, if I may so express it; I do not merely relate

what is in the actual *Tour de Nesle*, but things that *are not to be found in that*, among others, one scene in the fourth act. Buridan comes as a gipsy, and not as a captain, to visit the *wizard* Orsini. The latter wants to overawe the gipsy, who revealed to him the murders of the tower of Nesle as he had revealed them to Marguerite; and soon the magician falls at the gipsy's feet, seized with the very superstitions he himself instils into the vulgar-minded, to enquire if, perhaps, there be true sorcerers! This scene was bound to disappear directly Orsini was made an innkeeper.

"Finally, as to probability, I might say concerning the *proof* of my word, that I have the actual words of M. Dumas in the letter in which he says to me: 'Harel has come to ask my *advice* about a drama by *you* which he wishes to put on the stage. *Your play* . . . that which I have been happy to have been able to *add* to it . . . etc.' Nobody speaks like this of a work in which he has done *everything*.

"Next, a line from M. Harel, which I received before my departure (*after Janin's withdrawal*), in which he says to me: 'Write to me; take care of your health and, above all, *work*!' There were then, modifications, changes decided upon, a *work to be done*! . . . They deny it; I assert it and assert it with proof! . . . It is for the reader to decide the matter.[1]

"So, now, you will perceive that it will matter little to me whether M. Dumas either had or had not my *first* MS. in his possession. I have proved that he has had my second plan; from another source, he himself confesses to have possessed and partly copied Janin's MS. which was mine *spoilt*. . . . What more do I need?

"I will, therefore, resume my story from where I left off. *Felonies* were about to succeed one another like file-firing. It was on 8 April when I took my *scenario* to M. Harel. My father died on the 9th; he had come to Paris on purpose to fetch me away from the

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[1] "'I, the undersigned, one of the managers of the newspaper, *l'Avant-Scène*, ex-inspector-general of the Porte-Saint-Martin theatre, under M. de Lhéry, M. Harel's predecessor, assert that, a short time before M. de Lhéry's retirement, M. F. Gaillardet communicated with me concerning a MS. of *La Tour de Nesle*, in five acts without scenes, of which he was the sole author; that, later, and before his departure for the provinces, M. Gaillardet showed me a new plan of the same drama in scenes, in which was pretty nearly the whole of the original *Tour de Nesle*; a plan that had just been settled, he said, between himself and M. Harel. In witness of which, etc.,

DUPERRET'

contagion which reigned over the city, and his joy in being present at my first play induced him to remain with me! This recollection breaks my heart! . . . On the 10th, as a messenger of death, I went to console my poor mother. This was the night of the same day on which M. Harel wrote me the note wherein he said, '*Take care of your health!*' Wretched irony, flung at me between a misfortune which had come upon me and an act of robbery which was about to overtake me! 'Go,' he had said to me; 'I have a play before yours: you have three months before you. Take it easy and write to me!'

"I had scarcely been gone a month before I had to write to M. Janin to ask him about an announcement relative to *La Tour de Nesle*. A book had just appeared upon the same subject (*L'Écolier de Cluny*), and I did not wish it to be thought that my play was taken from the book. Janin replied—

"'I will willingly do what you ask me: but what is the good? I announce the approaching performance of your play. I say *your* and not *our*, because I count for *absolutely* nothing in it; you know the matter rests between you and M. Harel; that was agreed upon a long time ago, etc. JULES JANIN'

"'10 *May* 1832'

"After that, not a word further. I wrote to Paris, and I learnt that M. Dumas *has been made and has constituted himself* my collaborator. I leave the reader to imagine what my feelings were! . . .

"Beside myself, trembling with rage and indignation, I wrote to M. Harel to forbid him to act the play; to M. Dumas to beg him to prevent it. 'You have doubtless been misinformed,' I said to him; 'the play belongs to me and to me alone; I do not wish to have collaborators at all, certainly not clandestine ones, imposed upon me; I therefore appeal to you, for your own honour's sake, and I point out to you the necessity for stopping the rehearsals, etc.'

"No answer either from M. Harel or M. Dumas! . . . I set off, and, before going to my home, I went in travelling garb, as I was, straight to M. Harel. 'I am ruined!' he said to me; 'it is true I have deceived you. . . . Now, what are you going to do? . . . Stop the play!—You will not succeed in doing that; I shall change the title of it and play it. You can attack me for forgery, theft, plagiarism, what you like: you would obtain 1200 francs damages. Ask a lawyer! If, however, you let it be played you will gain 12,000 francs, etc.' He spoke the truth, for such is the protection ordinarily granted by our judges to the author who is robbed! . . . I returned home, pale with rage, and it was then I found the

grandiloquent letter from M. Dumas, quoted by me at the beginning of this article. Such are the principal facts.

" Now, what do you say to those lines of M. Dumas? 'I wrote to the young man, and the young man *never favoured me with an answer*!' This time it is the philosophy of *truthfulness*, with a vengeance! Nobody would have believed it, if I had not held the *evidence* and the *means* of proving what I am stating! M. Dumas not having yielded to the request or to the summons that I sent him to stop the rehearsals of the play (which was the first, if not the second, of his *mistakes*, from which he will never clear himself, because it proves his *complicity*), and M. Harel threatening to play in spite of me—which, both morally and physically, he was capable of doing, —there was nothing else left for me to do but to let my drama be performed, and according to the *conditions* stipulated in M. Dumas's letter, in which he stated that *his name would not be given*, that I should be the *sole author*, that he wished to *tender* me a service and not to *sell* it me.

" Very well, then, the day following the first performance, *asterisks* appeared on the playbills *before* my name, and now, M. Dumas wants to replace *my name* by his: it will be seen what encroachments these were! This is not all. When it came to payment, they would not give me more than *one share*. Now, listen carefully: during the current April, the Commission of Authors had made an agreement with M. Harel, before the performance of my play, which stipulated for a fee of ten per cent. for the authors, in the performances *to come on* at the Porte-Saint-Martin. I had, then, the right to the benefit of this agreement. M. Dumas enjoyed it, and more beside; he also received two and three hundred francs per night. What did they leave me? Forty-eight francs, the price of an old agreement! and M. Dumas took *half* of it from me—that is the service he wished to *tender* me, and not to *sell*!!!

" There was nothing for it but to go to law to protest against such deeds, as there is nothing but the police station against theft and pickpocketting. I therefore had recourse to the law courts.

" If more proof *still* be needed, I have it at hand, drawn up and set forth in the legal deeds, *properly attested*, which began the examination of this trial. But it would seem that the trial a little alarmed M. Dumas's public conscience, for he suggested to me to stop it by a compromise.

" In that compromise—First, we both acknowledged each other as *joint* authors of *La Tour de Nesle*; second, it was specified that this play should always be published and acted under *my name*, followed by asterisks; third, M. Dumas guaranteed me a settled sum of 48 francs per performance, and *half* of his tickets. 'To

what sum do they amount?' I asked him in all good faith. 'To 36 francs, upon my honour!' he replied, glancing at M. Harel; so I accepted 18 francs' worth of tickets. Next day, M. Harel would not fulfil the above-mentioned compromise, as far as it concerned himself, although he had been the instigator of, and witness to, it. It needed a *trial* to compel him to do it, and M. Dumas blamed him on that occasion. . . . I had that to thank him for . . . it was the *first* and *last* time. He also quoted my letter.

"A little while later, I learnt that M. Dumas, who had declared to me upon his honour that there would only be 36 francs' worth of tickets, had over 50! But, while taking the oath, he had looked at M. Harel. The MS. was still for sale. Barba, who had offered 1000 francs for it, and never 1400, would give no more than 500 francs. Half that sum should have been paid down to each of us there and then, and the remainder in six months from that date. In a few days' time, when I went to M. Barba to get my 125 francs, I learnt that M. Dumas had come and taken my share of the cash *payable* down with his own, *saying he was authorised to do so by me*!

"There is something so incredible in such an act, so petty, so degrading to the *man of letters*, that I should not have dared to cite it, had I not possessed the proof, written by M. Dumas himself. Indeed, when Barba informed me of *that*, not venturing to believe it, I wrote to M. Dumas, who replied that he had, indeed, received 250 francs; but Barba had said he had special arrangements with me (did they not say that it was Barba who had wished to pay there and then?); that, moreover, he had enabled me to exact the same advantage for myself as for him . . . that I could make use of his letter to get myself also paid at once, that he authorised me, etc. This was making use of a first *fraud* in order to commit a second, two *indelicacies* instead of one! I should have preferred to be settled by a six months' bill.[1] Now, Monsieur Dumas, what do you suppose I should reply to you—you who treated me in your letter as though I were a *poor devil* of a fellow? . . . I am too well-bred for you to guess. Now, in order to escape the sooner out of these

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[1] "Here is M. Barba's statement—

"'I think I remember (it is more than two years ago) that half the purchase money of *La Tour de Nesle* was given, in cash, to M. Dumas on his saying that that was agreed upon with M. Gaillardet, which the latter denied. He was then obliged by the terms of our agreement to accept my note for his share.

BARBA

"'29 *August* 1834'

unworthy details, which present so ill a picture, I will state that I should never oppose the insertion of *La Tour de Nesle* among M. Dumas's complete works (although that right resulted strictly as mine from the terms of our transaction together), if M. Dumas had consented to make a simple mention of my collaboration in that play. That is the method followed nowadays by M. Scribe. But, to a polite letter M. Dumas replied by one of those *incivilities* of which he claims the monopoly.[1]

"Finally, if I asked M. Dumas for my *first* MS. through a sheriff's officer, it was because it was, on his part, incredible disloyalty to put side by side with this *sole* and only MS. a play which had had at the least three!

"This is the truth about *La Tour de Nesle* and the whole truth. I should add to the documents which I have brought forward and to the proofs I have given, that, summoned before our peerage, the Commission of Authors, I cited and enumerated all these details and facts before M. Dumas in person! And there, as here, I more than once felt my cheeks flush with involuntary shame. Up to now, M. Dumas seemed great and sacred in my eyes, with the greatness of talent, the sacredness of art. So, if, after this controversy, which he provoked, another should follow it, my hand may indeed tremble . . . for behind M. Dumas the *man*, there is the *artist*, and, beneath the *shame*, is his *fame*.

"P.S.—In support of his statements, M. Dumas has produced various certificates, to each of which I shall only concede what is necessary in order to the appreciation of their worth and weight.

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[1] "'You have written *Struensée*!' he says to me. Does M. Dumas think to prove by that that I have done nothing in *La Tour de Nesle*? He forgets, then, that he, too, has written also *La Chasse et l'Amour*, *La Noce et l'Enterrement*? (who has heard these plays mentioned?) Then the wretched *Napoléon*, which has had two Waterloos, dragging with it in its second the downfall of the Odéon and of M. Harel! then, immediately after *La Tour de Nesle*, *Le Fils de l'Émigré*, which had three performances with M. Anicet; *Angèle*, which had thirty with M. Anicet; *La Venitienne*, which had twenty with M. Anicet; *Catherine Howard*, which has had fifteen without M. Anicet? Are we really to suppose that M. Dumas is not therefore the author of the beauties of *Antony*, of *Henri III.*, and of *Christine*? It has surely been said so here and there, and even partly proved! Perhaps it is to this that I owe M. Dumas's attack? But he need not be anxious: I shall never write a *Gaule et France* and certainly not a *Madame et la Vendée*.

"I will say nothing of M. Harel, who was the primary culprit in the whole affair, and whose *accomplice* M. Dumas is. M. Dumas ought to be ashamed to call upon such a witness.

"M. Verteuil, *M. Harel's secretary*, asserts to having gone to M. Dumas's house to fetch the five acts of *La Tour de Nesle* (excellent!) as he wrote them, to having re-copied his manuscript entirely (better and better!), which had no sort of resemblance with *that* (which?) of M. Gaillardet, a MS. which was in my possession about three months. . . . Ah! Monsieur Verteuil, I pull you up here! . . . *La Tour de Nesle* was performed on 31 *May*. It was on 29 March (look at the date at the top) when my MS. was received. I left on 10 *April*; M. Dumas was my collaborator on the 11th. He declares he did his work in *a week*, and you declare that my MS. had *then* been *about three months* in your possession? . . . Oh! Monsieur Verteuil, you are indeed *secretary to M. Harel*.

"M. Duvernoy certifies that I wished to sell the drama (I believe him there, indeed!). He asserted to me that M. Dumas had quoted a *false* price; this is rather more positive. There now only remains M. Janin's attestation. Ah! that, I confess, I scarcely expected. M. Janin writes that nothing can be more accurate than the details given by M. Dumas, which *he thinks* he remembers and that, on the whole, M. Dumas's reply is *truthful*! and M. Dumas declares that *Janin, accepted by me as a collaborator, had given his rights to him and been sent by M. Harel*! This is too much! M. Janin, then, forgets that *he had no further rights*, that he *had waived his claim*, that he *had proclaimed this to me* in a letter *written* and *signed* in his own hand?

"This is not all, and, since I must tell it you, reader, be informed that, after the first performance of *La Tour de Nesle*, it was M. Janin who *bound me* to protest; it was *at his house* that I wrote my protest; it was *he* himself who *wanted* to dictate it to me and *did do so*! He was furious with MM. Harel and Dumas. This is not all yet; in consequence of the lawsuit which arose between M. Harel and myself before the Tribunal de Commerce, M. Janin *himself* wrote to M. Darmaing, to support a protest that I made to the *Gazette des Tribunaux*: 'I beg M. Darmaing to insert the enclosed short note, I entreat it *in my own name*, and that of M. Gaillardet. I do not understand the stubbornness with which they seek to rob this young man of *that which belongs to him*, etc.' (See *La Gazette des Tribunaux*, 1 July 1832.) What do you say to it, reader? I had promised to relate the petty secrets of this apostasy, but I have not space; and, besides, I reflected that it was not worth the trouble, and so I sign myself—

"F. GAILLARDET"

After this reply, it will be realised that M. Gaillardet had no right to delay our duel, as, not having spared me less than I had him, it was I who considered myself the injured party. So, after a fresh call on the part of my seconds, the meeting was fixed for 17 October 1834.

CHAPTER V

Sword and pistol—Whence arose my aversion to the latter weapon—Philippe's puppet—The statue of Corneille—An autograph *in extremis*—Le bois de Vincennes—A duelling toilet—Scientific question put by Bixio—The conditions of the duel—Official report of the seconds—How Bixio's problem found its solution

I HAD wished the duel to be one with swords; M. Gaillardet insisted it should be with pistols. I have a strong repugnance to that weapon; it seems to me brutal and more that of a highway robber, who attacks a traveller from the shelter of a wood, than that of the honourable combatant defending his life. The thing I dread most in pistol-duelling (but I have only fought twice with this weapon) is unskilfulness, much more than dexterity. Indeed, two or three years before the period in which the events I am relating took place—namely, before 1834—I had had a pistol-duel; I have not spoken of it, not being able to give the name of the man against whom I fought, nor to tell the reasons why I was fighting. In that duel, which took place at seven in the morning in the bois de Boulogne, in the neighbourhood of Madrid, my adversary and I were placed at twenty paces distance from one another. Lots were drawn as to who should fire first and the advantage fell to my adversary. I planted myself, with pistol loaded, at a distance of twenty paces and I waited for the firing with the muzzle of the reader? of my weapon in the air.

but I have not sary fired. I saw his hand tremble and the the trouble, and the ground six lengths in front of me, and, however, I felt what seemed like the

sharp cut of a whip on my leg. It was the flattened bullet which struck the calf of my leg as it rebounded, making a wound two inches deep and forcing into my wound a piece of my trousers and boot. The pain was so great that I unconsciously pressed the trigger of my weapon and the charge went off into the air. The seconds then decided that the firing held good, and that any pistol discharged in a duel was discharged against the adversary.

I requested it to be continued, and the seconds began to reload the weapons; but, during that operation, whether from shaken nerves, or loss of blood, I nearly fainted. It was, therefore, impossible to go on with the duel. Consequently, I got into my carriage, and, as I did not wish to return to my mother in the state I was in, I had myself driven to Deligny's Swimming School, where my friend père Jean gave me a bathing-closet and sent to the rue de l'Université for Roux, the clever surgeon. Roux was not at home, but they brought back one of his assistants. The young man examined the wound, and, as the ball had passed through almost from one side to the other where it had entered, he decided it was shorter to begin the search by the aid of a fresh wound than to fumble about in the other; the swelling, moreover, made that almost impracticable. It was done as he wished; the young man opened the calf of my leg and extracted first the bullet, next the piece of boot and, finally, the fragment of my trousers; then they neatly put pad of lint on both sides of my wound, and bound up my leg, and I returned home hopping on one foot, telling my poor mother that I had torn my leg with a splinter of wood while bathing. I had, therefore, good reason for not having a liking for pistols—well though I shot with them, and, at that time, I was a remarkable shot—but M. Gaillardet insisted and I accepted his weapon. All the same, I wished to prove to his seconds that if I insisted on swords, it was not, indeed, for want of skill to use the weapon preferred by my opponent. I conse-

quently invited Soulié and Fontan to come to Gosset's. It was a singular thing! the seconds had drawn by lot their fighter, or, rather, M. Gaillardet and I had so drawn our seconds, and fate gave me Longpré and Maillan, who were simple acquaintances, and it gave Soulié and Fontan to M. Gaillardet, who were both my friends. Soulié, Fontan and I, then, went to Gosset's the night before the duel. A boy named Philippe usually loaded my pistols. He it was, therefore, who went to take down the puppet and to put up the bull's eye.

"No," I said to Philippe, "leave the puppet."

"But monsieur is not in the habit of firing at the puppet."

"I will only fire ten bullets, Philippe; it is merely to show these gentlemen that I am not one of your poor shots."

Philippe left the doll.

I put my first bullet an inch above its head; the second an inch below its feet; the third an inch to its right side, and the fourth an inch to its left side. "Now that it cannot escape either above, below, to right or to left, I am going to break it with my fifth bullet." And I broke it with my fifth. I aimed the sixth bullet at the ground; it stopped short at ten paces, almost. I shot at it with the remains of the contents of my pistol. At that moment, a swallow came and alighted on a chimney and I killed it. Fontan and Soulié exchanged looks. One of my principles was never to draw sword or to shoot before others; this time I had made an exception in their favour. Soulié himself shot extremely well; I had been his second four or five years previously, in a duel he had had with Signol, and in an experiment similar to this which I had made I had seen him break the small and large hand of a cuckoo clock one after the other at a distance of fifteen yards.

"Philippe," I said, as I came out, "I have to fight a duel to-morrow; I wish things to go off fair and square.

Take with you ammunition and pistols that I have never used, powder and shot, and be at Saint-Mandé by noon."

Philippe promised to do what he was bidden and we went away.

The affair assumed a seriousness I had never realised till then. I went to Bixio, begging him, as usual, to be present at the duel, not in the capacity of second, but in that of surgeon. The meeting was to be at twelve o'clock at Saint-Mandé! We were to go by the mail-coach. If I were not wounded or killed, we should immediately leave the field of battle for Rouen, where there was to be an inauguration of the statue of Corneille. Fontan, Dupeuty and I had been appointed by a majority of votes to represent dramatic authors. Bixio accepted, of course; he was to come and fetch me from the rue Bleue, where I lodged at the time. I returned home to take certain precautionary measures concerning my son and daughter, in case of my death. As regarded my mother, since the poor woman knew that I was going a journey of some length, I left a score of letters written from different towns in Italy; if I was killed, they could hide the truth from her by letting her believe I was still alive by the receipt of a letter at intervals, as though it had just arrived by post. These preparations took up the whole night. I only slept towards five in the morning. At ten o'clock, when my two seconds came in, they found me still asleep. The affair was still on. We were to have breakfast at the café des Variétés. There, my carriage came for us and we were to be taken and brought back by my horses; then, on the return (if return there were to be), we should take post-horses and start, as I have said, for Rouen. I sent Maillan and Longpré on in advance to order breakfast. I went downstairs ten minutes after them. I had, at all risks, taken duelling swords under my cloak; I still hoped the matter would end that way. I met Florestan Bonnaire on the staircase, whom I have already

mentioned in connection with Madame Sand. He had an album in his hand.

"Stop," he said, "are you going out?"

"Yes."

"Are you in a hurry?"

"Why?"

"Because, if you are not in a hurry, I wish you would go upstairs and write a few lines of poetry in my album."

"All right! Take the album upstairs; and leave it. On my return I will put you a scene in it from *Christine* or from *Charles VII.*"

"You cannot do it at once?"

"No, honestly I can't."

"Go along with you!"

"On my word of honour, I am in a hurry, and I would not be late for the whole world!"

"Where are you going?"

"I am off to fight a duel with Gaillardet."

"Bah!"

"Better late than never."

"Oh, then, my dear friend, write me my lines at once, I entreat."

"Why?"

"If you are going to be killed, see how interesting it would be for my wife to have the last lines you had written!"

"You are right, I had not thought of that. I would not like to deprive Madame Bonnaire of this chance; let us go up, my friend."

We went upstairs, I wrote ten lines in the album and Bonnaire left me delighted. I was, indeed, a little later than my seconds; but I had such a good excuse to offer them that they forgave me. Bixio came and joined us at the café. We were at Saint-Mandé by noon. We found Gosset's lad there, waiting for us with freshly cleaned pistols which no one had hitherto used. Looking behind

the carriage, we saw a hackney carriage following us. We suspected it was our adversary and his seconds.

We got down at the appointed place. The hackney opened, but we only saw Soulié and Fontan get out of it. M. Gaillardet had said that he would come by himself. They ran to me. I had already noticed the strange fact that they scarcely knew M. Gaillardet, whilst we were old friends. So all their sympathies were for me. I asked them to make one final effort to make M. Gaillardet fight with swords, warning them that if, at the first shot, nothing happened, I should demand a reloading of pistols. They promised to do their best in the matter of the change of weapons. At that moment a carriage appeared and stopped a few yards from us. M. Gaillardet got out of it. He was in regular duelling toilet: coat, breeches and black waistcoat, without a single white spot anywhere on him, not even his shirt collar.

It was with the recollection of the effect he made on me thus clad, that, sixteen years later, I wrote the scene between Comte Hermann and Karl, a scene where, at the moment of letting his nephew go to fight a pistol duel, Comte Hermann buttons Karl's coat and tucks the ends of his collar under his cravat. It is well known how difficult it is to hit a man clad wholly in black. When Carrel was wounded by Giradin, a year or two later, it was on the few threads from the end of his yellow waistcoat which stuck out beyond his black coat.

I shared my observation with Bixio.

"Where will you aim?" he asked me.

"I do not know, upon my word," I replied.

Suddenly I squeezed him by the arm.

"Well?" he asked.

"He has cotton wool in his ears," I said; "I will try to break his head for him."

Meanwhile, M. Gaillardet was talking animatedly with the seconds, and it was easily seen that his gestures were negative ones. Indeed, he refused a third time to

fight with swords. His two seconds came to announce that his resolution on this point was immovable; there was nothing more left to do but to choose a spot for the duel. We left the carriage where it was, instructing the driver to come when he heard the firing and we plunged into the wood. After walking for five minutes we found a suitable opening: straight and without the sun. There were but the final settlements to make—the business of the seconds—they met and entered into committee. Meanwhile, I placed the letters intended for my mother, in case of accident, in Bixio's charge. My final injunctions to him were delivered in so simple a manner and in such confident tones, that Bixio took my hand and pressed it, saying—

"Bravo! dear fellow! I should not have believed you would have been so cool under the circumstances."

"It is on such occasions that I am cool," I said to him; "I slept badly the night after M. Gaillardet's provocation; but, it is part of my very character—temperament, whatever you like to call it—from a doctor's point of view, to be far less moved by danger the nearer it approaches me."

"I should very much like to feel your pulse when you are actually standing up against one another."

"Just as you like; that is easily done!"

"We will see how many more beats it gives from excitement."

"I, too, would like to know; it is a matter of interest to me personally."

"Do you think you will hit him?"

"I am afraid not."

"Try, though."

"I will do my best . . . You have a grudge against him then?"

"I, not the least in the world; I do not know him."

"Well, then?"

"Have you read Mérimée's *Le Vase étrusque*?"

"Yes."

" Well, he says that every man killed by a bullet turns round before he falls ; I should like to know if this is true, from the point of view of science."

" I will do my best to gratify your desire."

The seconds separated from one another. Fontan and Soulié went towards M. Gaillardet and de Longpré, and Maillan came to me.

" Well," they said, " we have claimed that the choice of arms ought to be decided by lot ; but M. Gaillardet's seconds maintain the contrary ; we have come to consult you."

" You know very well what my opinion is ; I will fight with what you will, but I should prefer swords."

" Fontan and Soulié are reporting to M. Gaillardet, as you see. Stop, they are coming to us."

And, indeed, Soulié and Fontan were doing so, and we met them half-way.

" M. Gaillardet," said Soulié, " has just declared to us that if he does not fight with pistols, he will not fight at all."

" Toss five francs in the air," I said to my seconds ; " and draw up a written declaration of the refusal of these gentlemen to refer the matter to lot."

De Longpré flung up a 5-franc piece, but Soulié and Fontan stood silent.

" All right," I said ; " I accept M. Gaillardet's weapons, but I demand a declaration of the facts of the case."

They tore a piece of paper from a note-book, and on the crown of a hat Maillan wrote a report of the facts I have just given.

This pertinacity on my part cut short the conference. Pistols were accepted by me, and there only remained the settling of the terms. I wished we might be allowed to advance upon one another, and only to fire at our own will.

" M. Gaillardet," I said, " has laid down the terms about the arms ; it seems to me that, in exchange for the concession which I have made him in adopting them, I, in

my turn, have the right of deciding the way we shall use them."

"My dear friend," said Soulié to me, "the combatants have no rights; it belongs to the seconds to choose all rights."

"Very well! I request, if not as a demand, at least by way of suggestion, that my wish be submitted to M. Gaillardet."

The seconds went aside, and I found myself again alone with Bixio.

"*Sacredieu*! my dear fellow," I said to him, "that lad over there irritates me so much that I am dying to get even with him."

"Ah, try! you will have cleared up a very curious point in science."

Five minutes later, Maillan and de Longpré returned to me.

"Well," they said, "all is arranged."

"Good!"

"You are to be placed fifty yards from one another . . ."

"Why fifty yards?"

"Oh come, wait a bit. And you have the right to walk fifteen yards towards one another."

"Ah!"

"You are not satisfied?"

"It is not all that I wanted, but one must be satisfied with what one can get. Come, mark off the distances, my lads!"

"You see, Soulié and Fontan are doing it."

"Will you have the side where you now are?"

"As I am here, I may as well stay."

The gentlemen set to work to measure the distances, and I went on chatting with Bixio. Meantime, the shooting-boy loaded the pistols. The fifteen yards "We might walk over were marked by two sticks put "Have y pathway. They took M. Gaillardet his pistol "Yes." ıe. I took it in my right hand and

held out my left for Bixio to feel my pulse. M. Gaillardet was ready at his post. I signed to him to wait till Bixio had made his observation.

"Tell him then not to take any notice of me, but to fire just the same," said Bixio.

Bixio's character runs entirely on those two lines.

My pulse beat sixty-eight to the minute.

"Now go along with you!" Bixio said to me, "and do not hurry yourself."

Then he went into the wood with the four witnesses. I went and took up my position. Soulié clapped his hands three times. At the third clap M. Gaillardet ran the distance which separated him from the limit and waited. I walked towards him deviating from the straight line a little so as not to give him the advantage of helping himself to take aim by the path. M. Gaillardet fired at my tenth yard. I did not even hear the whistle of the bullet. I turned towards our four friends. Soulié, as pale as death, was leaning against a tree. I bowed my head and waved my pistol at the witnesses to show them that nothing had happened. Then I wanted to take the few yards I still had left me; but my conscience glued my feet to the soil, telling me that I ought to fire from the spot where I had sustained fire. And, I lifted my pistol and looked for the famous white point which the cotton wool in his ears promised me. But, after M. Gaillardet had fired, he had stood back to receive my fire, and, as he protected his head with his pistol, his ear was hidden behind the weapon. I had therefore to find another spot; but I feared to be accused of having taken too long a time in aiming, not being able to give, as an excuse, that I had not found the spot I was looking for. So I fired at random. M. Gaillardet flung his head back. I thought at first that he was wounded, and I confess I then felt a vivid feeling of joy for a thing I should have regretted now with all my heart. Fortunately, he was not hit.

"Come, let us re-load our arms," I said, flinging my pistol at the boy's feet, "and let us stay in our places, which will be a saving of time."

Let me be allowed, in conclusion, to substitute the written statement of the proceedings for my own recital. My feet, as when I sustained M. Gaillardet's fire, still seemed glued where I stood.

"Bois de Vincennes, 17 *October* 1834.
2.45 P.M.

"After the drawing up of our first note, the adversaries were placed at fifty paces apart, with power to advance each to within fifteen paces of one another. M. Gaillardet reached the limit and fired the first; M. Dumas fired second; neither of the shots went home. M. Dumas then declared he did not wish matters to end there, and demanded that the combat should be continued until the death of one of the two. M. Gaillardet acceded; but the seconds refused to re-load the arms. Whereupon M. Dumas proposed to continue the duel with swords. M. Gaillardet's seconds refused. Then M. Dumas urged that pistols should be re-loaded; but the seconds, after a long deliberation, and having tried to overcome his obstinacy, did not feel they could lend their countenance to a contest which could not but end fatally. Consequently the seconds withdrew and carried off the arms, and this withdrawal put an end to the duel.

"Fontan, Soulié, Maillan, de Longpré"

The seconds withdrew, and I found myself alone with M. Gaillardet, Bixio and the brother of M. Gaillardet, who had come through the wood just as the firing took place. I then proposed to M. Gaillardet, as we now had two seconds and two swords, to make use of both men and arms. He refused. Thereupon Bixio and I got into the carriage and returned by the road to Paris.[1]

[1] In order to close the story of this quarrel, which made such a stir in the literary world, we think we had better reproduce here the letter which M. Gaillardet, with an impulse which does him honour, wrote spontaneously to M. Marc Fournier, manager of the

We set out by mail-coach a couple of hours later for Rouen, with Fontan and Dupeuty.

Bixio was twice again my second; but one of the two duels was with swords, and the other not taking place at all, he had not the chance of assuring himself as to whether a man wounded or killed by a bullet turns round before he falls. He had to make the experiment on himself.

In the month of June 1848, as, in his capacity of representative of the people, Bixio was walking with his customary courage by the Pantheon barricade, a bullet, fired from the first floor of a house in the rue Soufflot, hit him above the collar-bone, ploughed into his right lung, and, after a course of fifteen to eighteen inches, lodged near the spine. Bixio turned round three times and fell.

"*Without any doubt of it one turns round!*" he said. The problem was solved.

Porte-Saint-Martin, since the revival of *La Tour de Nesle* at that theatre, in 1861.

(PUBLISHERS' NOTE.)

"MY DEAR FOURNIER,—A decree passed by the Courts in 1832 ordered that *La Tour de Nesle* should be printed and billed with my name alone; and this was done, in fact up to 1851, the period when it was forbidden. Now that we are going to revive it, I allow you, and even beg you, to join my name with that of Alexandre Dumas my collaborator, to whom I wish to prove that I have forgotten our old quarrels, and only remember our good relations in the past, and the large part his incomparable talent had in the success of *La Tour de Nesle*.—Yours, etc., F. GAILLARDET

"PARIS, 25 *April* 1864"

[TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.—The above note appears in the current edition of the Memoirs. In the Appendix to the Paris edition of 1854 will be found a long letter by M. F. Gaillardet, dated 12 April 1854, which Dumas did not reproduce in the Brussels edition.]

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

The masquerade of the budget at Grenoble—M. Maurice Duval—The serenaders—Escapade of the 35th of the line—The insurrection it excites—Arrest of General Saint-Clair—Taking of the préfecture and of the citadel by Bastide—Bastide at Lyons—Order reigns at Grenoble—Casimir Périer, Garnier-Pagès and M. Dupin—Report of the municipality of Grenoble—Acquittal of the rioters—Restoration of the 35th—Protest of a smoker

IT was with great happiness that I abandoned the literary side of my life, which had just compelled me, very much against my will, to be disagreeable to a man against whom I have preserved no rancour, and who, besides, about the time we have reached, had given up the theatre and, having published a remarkable book, so I am assured, *La Chevalière d'Éon*, left for America, and rendered the immense service to French literature of spreading and popularising it in the country of Washington Irving and of Cooper ; it was, I repeat, with great pleasure that I abandoned the literary side of my life to take up again the thread of political events which agitated the year 1832, even if they had not as yet stained Paris with blood and thrown a pall of mourning over France. Let us be permitted to take them up a little farther back than the month of June, which saw them burst forth ; we will return all too soon to that terrible moment.

After the trial of the artillery, of which I have given an account, the old secret societies, endued with the

Carbonist principles of 1821, were reorganised, and, at the same time, new societies were created. Our readers are acquainted with the name of the Society of the "Friends of the People," and that of the "Rights of Man": these, in a measure, were the parent societies; but two other societies had sprung up side by side with them: the Société Gauloise, which, at the time of the combat, proved itself one of the most ardent in flying to arms; and the organising Committee of the Municipalities, which connected itself by invisible but real bonds with the famous Society of the Philadelphians, which, under the Empire it had failed in overturning, had, for its principal leaders, Oudet, Pichegru and Moreau. Bastide was affiliated to the latter society, the principles of which were Babouvist; so, at the Lyons insurrection, which, caused by poverty, was of a socialistic tendency, Bastide was sent in to the insurgent town to see what the Republican party could gain from it. All was over by the time he arrived; but he thought he could discern the seeds of fresh insurrections in the dying one, and returned with the idea that something might be done in that direction. So he only stayed a short time in Paris, and soon set off again for the départements of Ardèche and Isère. There he found that fiery Dauphiné population which, in 1788, were the first to keep their States for Vizille; which, since 1816, had conspired against the Bourbons, and, since 1832, against Louis-Philippe. On 13 March he returned from a tour in the mountains with the two brothers Vasseur, both since dead, the eldest of whom was representative of the people in the Legislative Assembly; and, as they approached the gates of Grenoble, they learnt that the town, which they had left perfectly quiet, was in flames. This is what had happened.

On 11 March the young people had organised a masquerade which represented the Budget and the two supplementary Trusts. New regulations forbade this

masquerade ; but ancient custom had prevailed over new rules, and the masquerade procession had left Grenoble by the gate of France and was making straight for the Esplanade, where General Saint-Clair was to hold a review of the garrison exactly at that hour. The general was aware of the interdiction against the masquerade ; but, like a sensible man, he pretended not to see it. Unluckily, M. Maurice Duval, préfet of Isère, was less tolerant. It was the same M. Maurice Duval whom we shall meet again three or four months later, talking to Madame la duchesse de Berry with his hat on his head.

M. Maurice Duval, furious that the young folk of the town had transgressed the order, requested M. de Saint-Clair to make the soldiers take up arms. The result of this order was that when our masqueraders wanted to re-enter the town they found not only that the gate was shut, but also that behind each closed gate were a hundred or so of grenadiers waiting for them, armed to the teeth. The masqueraders, who were not above ten or twelve, could not believe in such an exhibition of force ; consequently they marched resolutely upon the grenadiers, who fixed their bayonets. Unfortunately the crowd which followed them thought it was a joke, as they did, and determined to enter also ; there were horsemen and carriages among them, but the grenadiers thought of nothing but their orders, and stood firm. The crowd, pushed upon the bayonets, began to complain that these were entering their bodies. The complaints were succeeded by cries of " Down with the grenadiers ! " and showers of stones followed this cry. A collision seemed imminent. Colonel Bosonier l'Espinasse took upon himself to command that the gates be opened. The grenadiers withdrew ; the crowd was swallowed up in the town, and, in the midst of this commotion, the masqueraders, the first cause of all the uproar, disappeared. Instead of being satisfied with this ending, which conciliated everybody, M. Maurice Duval protested against

the weak giving in, and made out that the Government would fall into contempt if he did not take his revenge.

A masked ball was announced for the night ; M. Maurice Duval forbade it. The mayor, a sensible man, rushed to the préfecture and pointed out to M. Maurice Duval that if they were deprived of a pleasure upon which they were counting, this interdict would produce the very worst effect on people whose heads were already excited.

" What of that ? " returned M. Duval, so one was told.

" What of that ? Why, there will be a riot ! "

" Good ! the rioters will fling stones at the soldiers ; but, if they fling stones, the soldiers will put bullets into them, that is all."

This retort, the truth of which there is nothing to establish, spread throughout the town.

At night, in the theatre, there were outcries to hold the ball forbidden by the préfet ; but matters went no further than that.

Next day the town seemed quiet ; but a rumour spread abroad that they were going to give a charivari that night to M. le préfet. The Dauphiné charivaris are celebrated ; some time previously they had given one at Vizille, which had made much stir. In the morning M. Maurice Duval was warned of the project. So he sent an order to the mayor to put a battalion of the National Guard under arms. Now this despatch,—by what cause or from what reason is still unknown,—sent from the préfecture at noon, never reached the Mairie until a quarter to five in the evening. This was too late : the summons could not take effect.

The charivari was no empty threat. About eight at night a gathering began to collect : it had nothing hostile about it, for nearly a third of it was composed of women and children. This crowd, which had no arms, nor even at that moment, at least, any means necessary for the giving of a charivari, was contented with shouts of laughter, uttering of halloes, and occasionally cries of " Down with the préfet ! "

This was all very disagreeable, but ranked, however, among the insults to which not merely public functionaries are exposed, but Conservative deputies even still more. A summons could put an end to the gathering of the crowd; but M. Duval was not content with merely re-establishing order; he wished to punish those who had annoyed him. He gave orders to MM. Vidal and Jourdan, police commissaries, to go to the barracks where the soldiers had been confined for four hours, each to take a company, and to *surround* the agitators. Amongst these agitators, a tipsy youth was bringing notice upon himself by his droll gesticulations and frantic shouts. The police agents made way through the crowd to arrest the *charivariseur* from the midst of its numbers. The crowd let them do so, and the young man was taken away to the guard-house. But the arrest was hardly accomplished before all those men who had kept silence, and given way to two policemen, reproached themselves with their cowardice, and excited one another, clamouring at the top of their voices for the prisoner. Then the charivari began to change its aspect: it turned to a riot. It was at this moment, and as the first deputy of the mayor was about to set the prisoner free—who, ignorant of the cause of all the uproar, had been asleep in the guardhouse—that the grenadiers and light infantry appeared: the grenadiers, led by M. Vidal, were advancing across the Place Saint-André; the infantry, led by M. Jourdan, by the rue du Quai. These were the only two ways of egress. The soldiers wore the gloomy expression which indicates determined purpose. They marched in file, advanced in silence, the drummers having their drums on their backs. Suddenly M. Vidal disappeared, and across the Place Saint-André this order was given from between the officer's clenched teeth—"Soldiers, forward!" The grenadiers lowered their rifles at this order—charged their bayonets and advanced at charging pace, taking up the whole width of the street. The crowd fled by the rue

du Quai, the only outlet which seemed open to it; but in that street it met and dashed against another crowd which was flying before the infantry. Then on all sides a frightful tumult took place in the crowd thus threatened, and it was drowned in the voice of an officer who gave this laconic order—"Fix bayonets! charge!" Almost at the same moment cries of pain succeeded those of terror; one could distinguish this from the anguished tones which cried out—

"Pardon! . . . Help! . . . Murder!"

Luckily the windows of a study opened and some thirty persons rushed into the shelter thus afforded. M. Marion, councillor to the *cour royale* of Grenoble, flung himself into the entry of Bailly's shop, and there met a man covered with blood. A student named Huguet, wishing to protect a woman threatened with a grenadier's bayonet, threw himself in front of her and received on his arm the blow meant for her. A cabinetmaker named Guibert backed up against the wall, seeing the circle of bayonets come towards him, cried out, "Do not hit me! I am not making any disturbance!" He received three thrusts from the bayonets, one of which, in the groin, sent him spinning close to the statue of Bayard.

Imagine that statue, after three hundred years, looking on with the eyes of the chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*, and judge of his amazement!

It was in the midst of this turmoil that Bastide and the two brothers Vasseur arrived. The opportunity for which the intrepid agent of the Société des Municipalités was looking had come to meet him. The two brothers Vasseur exchanged a few words with the associates, and, during the night, all the young men, enrolled in secret companies, rushed off to meet Bastide. All were of opinion that the moment had come to *strike the blow*. There was such enthusiasm in those young heads at this period, such courage in all young hearts, that they had scarcely realised their conviction before they were trying

to imbue others with the idea that the time for action had come. Every one thought that the fiery atmosphere he breathed was the atmosphere of the whole of France. It was then decided that, next day, they should take advantage of all the circumstances and try to get up a more serious struggle. It was, indeed, a wonder they waited till the morrow.

Next day everything was just what the patriots could desire : public anger was at its height, and general indignation overflowed. The number of wounded was exaggerated, and they said the journeyman cabinetmaker, Guibert, was dead. On all sides an inquest was being demanded. The procureur-général, M. Moyne, said openly that he should prosecute the guilty parties, whoever they were.

The *Cour royale* took up the matter. All these rumours, all this budding news, spread and increased with fearful rapidity, like a storm roaring in the air. The curses of the city were concentrated on the préfet and the 35th regiment of the line—on those who had given the orders, and those who had carried them out.[1] About ten o'clock in the morning the rappel beat in every street of Grenoble : the National Guard was being called out by order of the municipal councillors. But at the same time that the National Guards were going to their posts, the young men who formed no part of the National Guard ran hither and thither, passing about among the armed men, exchanging a few brief words with them which proved that the whole population shared the same feeling, and, asking for rifles, spread the flames of the insurrection that was already visible.

Then two very separate and distinct and decided authorities revealed themselves : the municipal authority, which proceeded by means of gentleness and conciliation ; and the regal authority, which exercised compulsion and terror.

Two proclamations both appeared simultaneously ;

[1] See Appendix.

one proceeding from the mayor's side, the other from that of the préfet; the préfet's proclamation was torn down with cursings; the mayor's was applauded enthusiastically. At this moment the roof of the Hôtel de Ville filled with infantry, whose rifles could be seen shining in the shade; the *piqueurs* of the previous day were recognisable, and from all parts shouts of "Down with the préfet! Down with the 35th of the line!" went up. The préfet, who thought he had taken all the coercive measures necessary, waited at the préfecture, having by him General Saint-Clair and all his staff.

At this instant M. Maurice Duval, MM. Ducruy, Buisson and Arribert were announced. These three well-known names, honourably known names, belonged to the municipal council of the town. They came to ask the préfet for the surrender to the National Guard of the positions occupied by the 35th of the line!

General Saint-Clair had realised the gravity of the situation; he guessed that something more serious than a quarrel supervening a charivari was exciting them down below; he discerned in it the counter-stroke of the Parisian risings; that there was Republican influence at work. Therefore, in spite of the opposition of the préfet, he announced that he was prepared to give up to the National Guard all the positions which contained under a dozen men.

"Does the guard which watches at the gate of your hôtel understand?" asked the préfet.

"That is the first I shall give up," replied the general.

In fact, the order was about to be given when a great noise was heard in the courtyard of the préfecture. The crowd had invaded it, and blows resounded on the gates.

"What does that signify?" General Saint-Clair asked.

"Parbleu!" replied M. Maurice Duval, laughing, "that means that with your fine measures of conciliation we, you and I, shall be flung out of the windows!"

The betting was a hundred to one that the prophecy

would be fulfilled; so the general, his staff and the préfet left the defence of the préfecture to a detachment of firemen, and hastened into the hall of the Mairie. They found a large number of the National Guard collected there to defend the Hôtel de Ville and the municipal council, if these should be attacked, but they did not seem in the least degree disposed to extend that protection to the préfet and General Saint-Clair. The latter was not mistaken, for he felt there was something unknown and more portentous beneath all this than a provincial riot; it was Bastide and the brothers Vasseur—old campaigners, whose first stripes traced back to Carbonarism—who were leading the movement.

At the cry that went up in the town of "Guibert is dead!" Bastide had conceived an idea which he had communicated to his companions; it was to pick up the body and carry it about the streets, shouting—"To arms!" We know what a similar procession, leaving the Vaudeville Theatre in 1830, had produced, and we have since seen what the same manœuvre did after the famous discharge of the 14th of the line on the boulevard des Capucines. Consequently, Bastide sent men to Guibert's dwelling. The dead body was to be borne to the house occupied by the brothers Vasseur, and the cortège was, from there, to march through all the streets of the town. Whilst they were going to Guibert's house, the younger Vasseur reorganised the volunteer corps with which, in 1830, he had attempted to invade Savoy. A desperate chamois-hunter, he had then carried on a most curious warfare among the mountains, which deserved a historian all to itself. Later, he was exiled from France, and travelled over Mexico and Texas; and, on his return, he was seized with cholera, and died. He was a man of lofty purpose, adored at Grenoble, specially by the men with whom he had made the strange enterprise of stirring up and conquering Savoy.

As he ran to announce that his volunteer corps was

ready, the messengers sent to Guibert's home to get the body came to tell in a whisper that Guibert was very ill, but not dead. This was a great disappointment; at the same time, with his usual cleverness, Bastide changed his plan: as people's spirits seemed prepared for bold undertakings, the voluntary corps of the younger Vasseur afforded him actual power; he ordered them to march upon the préfecture. It was the noise of the invasion led by Bastide which had echoed in the apartments, and had obliged General Saint-Clair and M. Maurice Duval to take refuge in the Mairie, in order not to be flung out of the windows, as the préfet said. At the same time, Vasseur the younger, with his volunteer corps, drew up in front of the Mairie windows. So, when General Saint-Clair made the suggestion of giving up to the National Guard all the posts with less than a dozen men at them, a voice rose up and shouted, "It is too late!"

What is it in those four words of eleven letters that is so fatal and cabalistic?

The insurgents now demanded the occupation of all the posts held by the National Guard with the exception of the three town gates, which were to be guarded by the National Guard, artillery and engineers unitedly. The conditions were severe. General Saint-Clair determined to face the insurgents instead of sending a parley; he went into the courtyard himself and wanted to harangue the crowd. But a young man came from out the crowd with his arm in a sling. It was Huguet, who had been wounded the previous day. He exchanged a few vivacious words with the general which were only heard by those around them, but which the latter repeated to others; and it was thus they learned that Huguet, with the vigour of a man who had risked his life the day before, protested against the return of the 35th of the line. Universal applause greeted Huguet's protest; whilst Vasseur, thinking it was time to learn why he and his volunteers were there, embraced him before everybody. The effect of this saluta-

tion was electrical. They shouted, "*Vive Vasseur! Vive Huguet! Vive le Maire*! . . . *Down with the préfet! Down with the 35th of the line!*"

A young man called Gauthier stretched out his arm, seized General Saint-Clair by the collar, and cried aloud—

"General, you are my prisoner!"

The general offered no resistance, although the soldiers were within call of his voice, and he knew he had only to say a word to bring about a more terrible struggle than that of the previous day; but he hesitated to give that word, and followed the man who arrested him. They took the general to his hôtel, and Vasseur placed sentinels from his volunteer company at every door. At the same time, Bastide, who was studying the whole situation, thought that the moment had come to assault the préfecture. The doors were forced in at the first attempt, and, in spite of the resistance of the firemen, the insurgents entered the vestibule and tried the doors of the apartments: they were all solidly barricaded on the inside. A street urchin—they are everywhere to be found, and always at the head of any uproar—succeeded in breaking and forcing open the lower panel of a door. Bastide slipped through the aperture and received a blow from a bayonet which tore his coat and scratched his breast; but he seized the bayonet with both hands, and the soldier, drawing his rifle towards himself at the same time drew in Bastide, who found himself inside, snatched the rifle from the soldier's hands, and opened the two sides of the swinging door to those who followed him. The préfecture was captured.

The rumour had gone abroad that the préfet was hidden in a cupboard. Bastide himself presided over the opening of all the cupboards; but they were empty—of préfets, at any rate. The next thing was to take the citadel. At Grenoble, as in ancient Arx, the citadel is situated on a hill, and commands the whole town. Bastide asked for some volunteer to take the citadel with him; an artillery-

man named Gervais came forward. They both climbed the steep slope ; when they reached within twenty yards of the sentry, the latter cried—

"Who goes there ?"

"The Commandant of the fortress," replied Bastide.

The sentry presented arms and let Bastide and M. Gervais pass. The taking possession was as rapidly carried out as the entry. Bastide, who remembered his profession of artillery captain, had six pieces of cannon brought out and put in position in the square. When they had reached that place, their success had reached its height. Nothing, indeed, had been prepared that could give a serious check to such a sudden attack. Whilst Bastide was entering the préfecture and carrying the citadel, timid hearts were alarmed to see the direction in which the fiery spirits were going. Reaction began to set in.

When Bastide came down into the town again, after making sure of the citadel, he found that the National Guard had relieved the posts at General Saint-Clair's hôtel. It had taken all Vasseur's influence over his men to prevent a collision between them and the volunteer corps. From that time Bastide realised that, if Lyons did not rise, all was lost. General Saint-Clair, who desired to restore the peace which he had not been able to maintain, spoke of sending a deputation to General Hulot, charged with asking him for the return of the 35th. He mentioned the name of M. Julien Bertrand. Bastide offered and was accepted. M. Bress, aide-de-camp of General Saint-Clair, was added to them, and they all three set out for Lyons. It will be understood that the mission demanded by Bastide was only an excuse. He wanted to confer with the Republicans of Lyons, and to ascertain what could be done.

One single power was left at Grenoble after they left : the municipal. The préfet was sheltering in the barracks

—the National Guard was distributing cartridges through the mayor.

The three deputies reached Lyons in the middle of the night. They were at once taken to General Hulot. Bastide was the spokesman.

"Grenoble is taken; General Saint-Clair is a prisoner; the préfet is in hiding, or has taken flight; thirty-five thousand insurgents occupy the town; and the peasants of the surrounding country are beginning to come down from the mountains."

This news, given with the air of perfect truth, which neither M. Bertrand nor M. Bress denied, frightened General Hulot, who acceded to the retreat of the 35th and the sending away of the préfet, gave a written order to M. Bress and despatched him straight to Paris.

Bastide left General Hulot's house with M. de Gasparin, Mayor of Lyons. M. de Gasparin held advanced Liberal opinions: he reminded Bastide that he was the son of the regicide, and that all his inclinations were towards Republicanism. Bastide left M. de Gasparin and immediately put himself into communication with the Republicans of Lyons, whom he had seen during his last tour. They assured him that, if Grenoble only held out forty-eight hours, they would begin a 24th of November more terrible than the first. And, indeed, that 24th of November burst out in 1834. Bastide set out for Grenoble. All had calmed down during his absence. The volunteer corps was disbanded, and constitutional order was re-established everywhere. They offered Bastide the choice of taking refuge for himself in Piedmont or Savoy; but he feared that, by following this advice, he would pass for an insurrectionary agent, and contented himself with taking a boat and going down the Rhône with the two brothers Vasseur, who lived in the département de l'Ardèche; when there, the three conspirators would be at home, and would have a thousand means of evading search. At Romans they were all three arrested

and taken back to Grenoble. At the same time, M. Huguet was arrested, he who had harangued General Saint-Clair, also M. Gauthier, who had arrested the general. Meanwhile General Hulot's orders had been carried out, and on 16 March the 35th of the line had left the town.

Casimir Périer, bilious and irritable all over, still more irritable on account of the disease to which he was to succumb two months later, learnt this news with rage. Casimir Périer was a minister of strong aversions and petty views ; to him France was divided into friends and enemies. His desire was not to govern France, but to destroy his personal enemies. A financier, he wanted peace before all else ; he did all in his power to keep up the revenue, and made impossible efforts to increase it still more. The Bourse actually went into mourning at his death !

By his order *le Moniteur* published an article in praise of the 35th. This was nothing : from the point of view of the Government the 35th had merely done its duty. But, simultaneously with these praises, which had been allowed to pass, the article added that the military had only resisted aggression : that many were already wounded when they charged, whilst, on the contrary, the injuries of the agitators had been exaggerated. These inaccuracies were common knowledge ; but one knows that the Government of King Louis-Philippe did not shrink from that sort of thing. MM. Duboys-Aymé and Félix Réal, deputies of the arrondissement of Grenoble, wrote to *le Moniteur* to give the real facts of the case. *Le Moniteur* refused to put in their letters. In the sitting of 20 March, M. Duboys-Aymé asked leave to speak, mounted the rostrum and questioned the minister upon the subject of the occurrences at Grenoble. Garnier-Pagès, an advanced leader of the Republican party in the Chamber, supported him.

" How can the Government bestow blame or praise without previous inquiry ? How can it be satisfied from

the préfet's report that the préfet did right; from the report of the military commandant how decide that the armed force acted rightly; from the report of the procureur-général how be satisfied to extol the procureur-général?"

"I," the orator said, "do not judge harshly like that. Although I may say that the correspondence and the two newspapers of Grenoble—papers of absolutely opposite opinions—relate the facts in the same way; although we have a thousand proofs to one that the rioters were not summoned to disperse by the town authorities, I should but speak hypothetically, and I say: *If those orders were not carried out, still the citizens were killed!*"

At these final words the Centres took up the dubious phrase and turned it into the affirmative; they shouted loudly, so that the speaker could not go on.

M. Dupin ascended the rostrum; the Centres quietened down. They knew that, under any circumstances, M. Dupin was the King's advocate, both in the law-courts and in the tribune.

Here is a specimen of the speech of the deputy for la Nièvre—

"How can you expect a government to progress," asked M. Dupin, "when at the very heart of the national representation itself—a microcosm of the population, among the trustees of its power—the first movement is not in favour of the authorities and the instruments of law, and the first impulse is to put authority in the wrong and reason to flight? It is said that the Riot Act was not read; but when should it be read? When public gatherings become disquieting by their outcries and by their presence, but not when a violent aggression displays itself by methods of action and open attacks."

At these words the president of the Council rose; though pale, he had a fiery and energetic soul in his sickly, debilitated body, and he exclaimed—

"That is the question; speak!"

M. Dupin, encouraged by the president of the Council and by the cries of the Centres, continued—

"When legal order is called upon, it must submit itself to the rules of legality. If I am attacked by a malefactor in the streets of the town, I invoke the help of the magistrates, the legal protection of authority; but if, single-handed, I am attacked on the high road, I become a magistrate in my own cause, and I defend myself from anything and everything. . . . Think of it, gentlemen, can a French army consent to quit its hearths, its family, to be at the disposal of the magistrates, to watch over the defence and protection of its citizens, and yet allow itself to be insulted, attacked, killed at a street corner and at the bottom of a passage? Messieurs, I am certain that the whole population of Grenoble is indignant.

"M. GARNIER-PAGÈS.—Yes, indignant, that is true.

"M. DUBOYS-AYMÉ.—Indignant, but against authority.

"M. DUPIN.—It is indignant against the authors of the disturbance. Who, then, brought about these troubles and misfortunes? Not the young men, who were simply amusing themselves with an inoffensive masquerade. IT IS AN ABOMINABLE CRIME, IT IS TO SIMULATE THE MURDER OF THE KING!"

Thus a great confession had just been made by M. Dupin, the king's man.

The king *is the Budget and the two supplementary trusts*. To make game of the two and the Budget by means of a masquerade is to simulate the murder of the king! An enemy would not have said anything better. O La Fontaine! good La Fontaine! what stones M. Dupin has flung at the head of his friend Louis-Philippe! This last one was one of the heaviest.

A few days later, a report arrived from the municipality of Grenoble. It stated—

"1. That the masquerade of 11 March in no way typified the assassination of the king.

"2. That the National Guard had been convoked too late to assemble.

"3. That no shouts in any way hostile to the Government or to the king had been uttered beneath the préfet's windows.

"4. That M. Duval had, indeed, given the order to the Commissaries of the Police to surround the gathering of people, but not to disperse it.

"5. That no legal summons had been made.

"6. That the place of gathering was destitute of stones that could be thrown at the soldiers.

"7. That amongst the wounds given to the citizens, fourteen had been received from behind.

"8. That one soldier only had entered the hospital four days after the events of the 12th, for some inflammatory attack consequent on a kick.

"9. Finally, that the events of the 13th were the inevitable result of the exasperation of mind caused by a flagrant violation of the law, and that the conduct of the National Guard of Grenoble had been not only irreproachable, but even deserved the gratitude of the citizens."

Better still, the tribunal of the Police Correctionnelle, before which the accused had been sent, for want of power to hand them over to the Court of Assizes, decided that their conduct had not been more than imprudent; in consequence of which decision Bastide was liberated, and returned to Paris.

Not one witness had desired to recognise him, not even the fireman who had dealt him a blow in the chest with his bayonet, and from whom Bastide had snatched his gun. But the Government could not be wrong, and the 35th returned to the town, drums beating, bands playing, slow matches ready. Only one protest was made, which will illustrate the French mind.

An approaching workman, who did not know for what deadly object this match was intended, remarked to the gunner—

"My friend, please let me have a light for my pipe."

CHAPTER II

General Dermoncourt's papers—Protest of Charles x. against the usurpation of the Duc d'Orléans—The stoutest of political men—Attempt at restoration planned by Madame la duchesse de Berry—The *Carlo-Alberto*—How I write authentic notes—Landing of Madame near La Ciotat—Legitimist affray at Marseilles—Madame set out for La Vendée—M. de Bonnechose—M. de Villeneuve—M. de Lorges

NOW that we have seen what was happening in the east of France, let us see what was happening in the west. In order properly to estimate the fire which was about to set Paris aflame, we must cast a glance on that which was devouring the provinces. Having followed the attempts of the Republican party in the départements of the Rhône and of Isère, let us follow those of the Legitimist party in the départements of La Loire-Inférieure Morbihan and la Vendée.

Further, we can guarantee the exact accuracy of the incidents we are about to give: they are taken from the papers of General Dermoncourt, my father's aide-de-camp, of whom I have often had occasion to speak; and amongst those papers were a large number of notes sent by the Duchesse de Berry herself, which had been used in the second edition of the book, *La Vendée et Madame*, published by General Dermoncourt in 1834.

It will not have been forgotten that, by a strange coincidence of circumstances, it was this General Dermoncourt and the same M. Maurice Duval with whom we have just been concerned in connection with the troubles at Grenoble, who, the one being commandant of the military

force, the other representing the regal authority, took Madame la duchesse de Berry in her hiding-place at Nantes.

Let us say a few words about the way in which the insurrection of la Vendée had been set going, and as to the point it had reached at the period to which we have now come; a few words which will form a sequel to what we have just related of the events at Lyons and Grenoble. Twenty years ago everybody was acquainted with the smallest details of what we are about to describe; now, every one has forgotten them. History passes quickly in France! In another part of our *Memoirs* we followed Charles x. and the Royal Family to Cherbourg. On 24 August 1830 the old king protested at Lulworth against the usurpation of the rights of his family, and reserved to himself power over the regency until the majority of his grandson.

Here is the protest, which, I believe, has not been published in France—

"We, Charles, the tenth of that name, *by the grace of God, King of France and of Navarre.*[1] The misfortunes which have just burst over France, and the desire to guard against greater, decided us on the 2nd day of the current month, in our Château of Rambouillet, to abdicate the crown, and at the same time we induced our beloved son to renounce his rights in favour of our grandson, the Duc de Bordeaux. By a similar deposition, dated yesterday, at the same place, and repeated in the second Act, we named provisionally as lieutenant-general of the kingdom a prince of our blood who has since accepted from the hands of rebels the usurped title of King of the French. After an event of such a nature, we cannot hasten too soon to fulfil the duties which devolve upon us, as well in the interests of France, a sacred trust which has been handed on to us by our ancestors, and in our unswerving confidence in divine justice. For which reasons we protest, in our own name and in that of our successors, against all usurpation of the legitimate rights of our family to the crown of France. We revoke

[1] See Appendix.

and declare the above-mentioned deposition null by which we entrusted the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom to the Duc d'Orléans.

"We reserve to ourselves the prerogative of the regency so long as there is need for it, until the majority of our grandson Henri v, who was called to the throne in consequence of the Act issued at Rambouillet on the second day of this month; this majority, fixed by Crown Statutes and the tradition of the kingdom, will be reached at the beginning of his fourteenth year, on the 30th day of the month of September 1833.

"In case it shall please providence to remove us before the majority of King Henri v., his mother, our beloved daughter, the Duchesse de Berry, shall be Regent of the kingdom. The present declaration shall be made public and communicated to those who are rightly concerned in the matter when circumstances shall ordain.

"Drawn up at Lulworth, the 24th day of the month of August of the year of grace 1830, the sixth of our reign. *Signed*: CHARLES"

Nevertheless, six months later, Madame la duchesse de Berry having thought a third Vendée possible, and having communicated that belief to the old king, he gave her a letter, dated from Edinburgh, addressed to the Royalists in France, so that, in spite of his declaration of 24 August, they should recognise her at once as Regent. The declaration is as follows:—

"M * * *, Head of the Civil Authority in the province of * * *, shall combine with the principal authorities to draw up and publish a proclamation in favour of Henri v., in which they shall announce that Madame, Duchesse de Berry, shall be regent of the kingdom during the minority of the king, her son, and that she shall take the title upon her entry into France; for such is our will.

"*Signed*: CHARLES

"EDINBURGH, 27 *January* 1834"

Since her departure from France, Madame la duchesse de Berry, whose body was enfeebled, temper changeable and spirit vigorous and adventurous, had dreamed of

playing the part of Maria Theresa. La Vendée was her Hungary, and the valiant woman, leaving Paris by way of Rambouillet, Dreux and Cherbourg, hoped to re-enter it *viâ* Nantes, Tours and Orléans. The whole of her little Court, whether through interest or from blindness, painted France to her as ready to rise up. Letters from la Vendée even left no doubt on the point. M. de Sesmaisons himself a statesman and consequently competent to judge in the matter, besides being a peer of France, at that time wrote to Madame—

"Let Her Royal Highness but come to Vendée and she will see that my stomach, although European in its stoutness, will not prevent me from leaping either the hedges or ditches! If Madame de Staël called M. de Lally-Tollendal the stoutest of sentient beings, M. de Sesmaisons might be styled the *stoutest of political men*."

The following anecdote is related of him :—

When M. de Sesmaisons came from Nantes to Paris by public conveyance, he was in the habit of taking two places in the carriage, less from selfishness than from courtesy; for, though living in the present century, he was a type of the courtesy of another epoch, as he was a type of loyalty for all ages. Having changed his valet, and being about to start for Paris, he sent his new servant to the mail coach-office to reserve his two places as usual. The man returned two minutes later.

"Well," M. de Sesmaisons asked him, "can I have my two places?"

"Yes, monsieur le Comte; only one will be in the coupé and the other inside."

Carried away by all these exhortations, and still more by her own wishes, Madame wrote on 14 December to M. de Coislin—

"I have long been aware, my dear comte, of the zeal and devotion which you and yours are ready to show for my son's cause. I would like to reiterate that, on such

occasions, I will count on you, as you may rely on me for gratitude. MARIE CAROLINE

"14 *December* 1831"

It was therefore decided in the little Court of Massa—Madame had gone to Italy after she left England, and lived in a town in the duchy of Modena—that public spirit in France had arrived at a sufficient point of maturity to be acted upon. Consequently a letter in cipher, written in invisible ink, informed all the leaders in the south and west of France to make themselves ready. Here is the translation of that letter. The first undeciphered word which betrayed all the rest was *Lyon*—

"I shall make known to Nantes, Angers, Rennes and Lyons that I am in France; prepare to take up arms as soon as you receive notice to that effect, and calculate that you will probably receive it about the 2nd or 3rd of next May. If messengers cannot pass through, public report will inform you of my arrival, and you will take up arms without delay."

On 24 April 1832, Madame embarked on the steamer *Carlo-Alberto*, which she had chartered at her own expense. The princess put into port at Nice; on the evening of the 28th she reached the waters of Marseilles, in sight of the Planier lighthouse, in the neighbourhood of which she was to join forces with her followers. The period between the night of the 19th to the 30th was fixed for the movement which was to burst forth at Marseilles.

From this moment we can follow Madame la duchesse de Berry step by step, without fear of making mistakes for one instant, as to her itinerary, or as to the events which accompanied her entry into France, and her journey through the southern provinces. This is how we are sure of the facts which we are going to relate. My connection with General Dermoncourt is known; I do not know when it began; it went back to my infancy. Dermon-

court was one of those rare friends who remain faithful through ill fortune; and from the moment I came to Paris, like Lethières, another friend of my father, he held out an encouraging hand to me. He had commanded in la Vendée: it was he who had received Madame when she came out of the chimney-place where she was hidden. Being obliged to choose between the frank and open face of the general and the préfet's surly one, the princess placed herself in his hands and under the protection of his honour. He has often related to me during our long talks all the episodes in that war. Once I suggested he should jot down all his recollections on paper, and he agreed to do so. I looked over his work; I put it into a possible shape, whilst religiously retaining the substance, and the first edition of *La Vendée et Madame* appeared. The book made a great stir; three thousand copies were sold in less than a week. Everybody read it, even the princess herself.

Madame was much astonished to find in a book where Republican sentiments were openly avowed such complete impartiality and courtesy. She sent to thank General Dermoncourt; and, as a few details were erroneous, or lacking in complete accuracy, she offered notes to General Dermoncourt in case he should publish a second edition.

The ingratitude of the Government left General Dermoncourt almost in a state of destitution. A first edition brought him in 2000 francs, I believe; a second edition, producing the same amount, was to him like manna dropped from the skies. He accepted the comments of Madame la duchesse de Berry, and advertised a second edition, revised, corrected and increased to twice the thickness by authentic notes given to the author since the first publication. Unfortunately, I knew the source whence the notes came, and I was afraid that they would give a Legitimist tone to the book. I authorised Dermoncourt to take what suited him in the first edition, but I refused to lend a hand in the second. The second edition appeared, and had as great a success as the first.

I was not mistaken. Unconsciously to the general, probably, the tricolour flag had faded in his hands, and, as far as those were concerned who only gave superficial attention to the matter, it could be taken for a white flag, or, at any rate, a whitewashed one.

Nowadays, when my opinions are sufficiently well known for me not to fear being accused of any other motive than sympathy with the misfortunes of the woman, I do not hesitate, now we have reached this period in our history, to make use of the notes which have remained at my disposition. The reader will therefore have an official itinerary and authentic facts put before him. Having concluded this digression, we will return to our narrative.

Landing was very laborious. A strong fishing-boat appeared for several nights at the Planier lighthouse, was signalled and recognised: the sign to come nearer was given, and it came alongside the *Carlo-Alberto*. But there was a heavy sea; the two boats, lifted one after the other without harmony in their movements by the furious waves, collided, fell apart, came nearer and knocked up against one another; the moment had to be seized, when the two sides were nearly on a level, to spring from one to the other at the risk of a dangerous descent upon the wet and consequently slippery seats of the boat. At last, the trans-shipment was accomplished. The princess crossed from the steamer into the ship's boat with six persons from her suite, and a pilot who had been in Madame's service for a long while, and who knew all the points of the coast, as well as the different rallying signals that might indicate that the shore was dangerous, or that they might land in safety.

The boat which had come to meet the princess was a fishing-boat: its sails were saturated with sea water, which never dries; the water stood stagnant in the bottom; the tar with which the boat was repaired exhaled a nauseous and disgusting odour; moreover, it was without a bridge, without shelter from the cold and piercing sea

wind, and it allowed the crest of the waves which broke against its sides to pour over in-board, sometimes in wet spray, at times in a heavy rainfall. The princess and her companions were ill clad for such a condition of things ; added to this, they were overtaken by that intolerable indisposition called *sea sickness*. Imagine a dark, cold, gloomy night, and you will have an idea of the hour which passed after leaving the steamer for the fishing-smack. At last they thought they had reached the landing-place, when, on approaching the land, they perceived a light on the shore. As they came nearer, it increased in size and became decipherable : what they had at first taken for the pre-concerted signal transformed itself into a blazing fire, and, by the aid of a night-glass, they could distinguish eight to ten coastguardsmen warming themselves by the fire. They had to take themselves off hastily to a distance; and yet it was imperative they should land before daybreak. Unluckily, the point whereat the coastguardsmen had established themselves was the only one where it was possible to land ; almost everywhere else the coast was inaccessible. They risked themselves among the rocks, and succeeded in grounding by a miracle.

Madame had shown admirable courage during the three hours that had just elapsed. She was possessed of one of those delicate and nervous organisations which seem as though they could be crumpled up by a breath, but which, nevertheless, do not enjoy the full use of their powers until storms are in the air and in their hearts. As she landed, she uttered a cry of joy.

" Come," she said, " forget it all : we are in France ! "

Yes, they were in France, and there their real danger began.

Happily, the pilot who had just brought the boat to land on an almost inaccessible shore was also as well acquainted with the inland country as with the seacoast ; he took command of the little band, and respectfully but

firmly pointed out to the princess and her companions that they must start at once to gain a hiding-place before day broke.

Madame was expected at a house three leagues from the shore, belonging to an old officer devoted to her cause ; but when she reached the house its owner did not think the retreat safe enough, and she had to go three-quarters of a league farther to another dwelling-place. The route taken was among rocks and by almost impracticable ways. It was broad daylight when at last they arrived. The princess was horribly tired, as were also those who accompanied her ; but as she did not complain, no one else dare do so. The house was an ideal hiding-place for conspirators ; it was lonely, and surrounded by woods and rocks.

They insisted that Madame should go to bed ; but she would not consent until she had seen two members of her suite set off for Marseilles. These persons were charged with the mission of informing M * * * of her arrival. M * * * was one of the people who had made himself responsible to the princess for an insurrection in her favour, not only at Marseilles, but also throughout the whole of the south.

We will indicate by asterisks, by initials, or by name, according as we shall judge it advisable to have more or less regard for their position, those persons who took part in the enterprise the course of which we are relating.

The same night, one of the messengers returned with a note ; it was short, but significant. It enclosed this simple statement, " Marseilles will move to-morrow."

The other person had remained to take part in the movement. Madame was beside herself with delight. According to what she had been told, Marseilles and the South only wanted the opportunity to rise in her favour. Night came ; but, in spite of the fatigues she had gone through, the princess slept little. The first arm of her

party was engaged, and was in action at that very moment. This is what really took place.

Throughout the night the town was thronged with Legitimist gatherings, carrying the white standard, and shouting, "*Vive Henri V.!*" At three o'clock in the morning a dozen armed men appeared at the Church of St. Laurent, got possession of the keys of the tower, and, whilst some rang the tocsin, others set up the white standard; others, without the tocsin, had done the same at the Patache. The tricolour had been dragged in the gutter. At the same time, the esplanade de la Tourelle was crowded with people. It was said that the Duchesse de Berry and M. de Bourmont were expected on the *Carlo-Alberto*. This rumour was set about with the object of diverting the attention of the police towards the sea. Finally, a great crowd still resorted to the Palais de Justice with shouts of "*Vive la ligne! vive Henri V.!*"

Unhappily for Madame's fortunes, the sub-lieutenant who commanded that post was a patriot, almost a Republican, and, instead of sympathising with the cries and the movement, he came out of his guard-house, commanded the gathering to disperse and, upon a refusal to do this by the person who appeared to be leader, he seized him by the collar and, after a pretty violent struggle, flung him into the guard-house. The leader was hardly arrested before a panic of terror took hold of the conspirators: cries of "Save yourselves!" were heard, the soldiers fell upon the fugitives and three fresh arrests were made. At two o'clock in the afternoon a frigate left the harbour to give chase to the *Carlo-Alberto*, which could be discerned floating on the horizon, without sail or steam; but, at sight of the hostile disposition being taken against her, the *Carlo-Alberto* got up steam and set sail, shrouded herself in smoke and sail and disappeared towards the south-east.

It was fortunate for the Duchesse de Berry; they believed she was on board, and, the *Carlo-Alberto* having

regained the high seas, they were convinced it carried her away with it. She, however, waited still in the little house. The persons who remained with her could form an idea of her impatience as one, two, three hours went by. At last, at four o'clock, two messengers arrived, scared and breathless. They shouted—

"The movement has failed! You must quit France instantly!"

The duchesse bore up against the blow, and had the courage to smile.

"Leave France?" she said, "I do not see that; the urgent thing is to go from here, in order not to compromise our hosts; people may have followed the messengers."

Besides, it was not an easy matter to leave France. The *Carlo-Alberto* had disappeared; they could only reach Piedmont again by following Hannibal's route. Would it not be worth while risking everything, to take a short cut across France, and to take advantage of the conviction of the police that the Duchesse de Berry had fled on the *Carlo-Alberto*, in order to attempt in la Vendée an insurrection which had just miscarried so pitifully at Marseilles?

Such was the opinion of the duchesse, and, with that rapidity of decision which is one of the potent elements in her adventurous character, she gave the order to prepare for departure. They had neither carriages, nor horses, nor mules; but the duchesse asserted that, having passed her apprenticeship in travelling on foot, she felt she had sufficient strength to travel in that way during the next night, and, if necessary, the following nights also.

There only remained, therefore, to find a guide. They sent for a reliable man and started about seven in the evening. Night came on fast; it was dark, they could scarcely see where to set their feet; in a few hours' time all trace of the footpath had disappeared. They stopped and tried to take their bearings. They found they were

in the midst of rocks interspersed with stunted olive-trees; the guide was doubtful: he looked alternately at the earth and at the sky, both equally dark; finally, when urged by the impatience of the duchesse, he admitted that they were lost.

"Upon my word!" says the duchesse. "I am delighted! I am so tired that I was going to ask you to go no farther."

So, serving her apprenticeship to a bivouacking life, she wrapped herself in her cloak, and lay down on the ground and slept. The same thing happened to the Duchesse de Montpensier when she fled from France, with Colonel Thierry.

Madame awoke, frozen with cold and very ill; her indisposition seemed sufficiently serious to cause her travelling companions much anxiety. Happily, during her sleep they had hunted about and found a sort of hut which was used by shepherds as shelter during storms. They carried the duchesse there, where she waited all day by a fire of heather and dried branches. Meantime, one of Madame's companions, M. de B——l, who belonged to that part of the country, had gone in quest of a carriage. He returned at daylight with a cabriolet which would only hold three persons. They had, therefore, to separate, and arranged a meeting-place at M. de B——l's house, at G * * *.

Madame, M. de Ménars and M. de B——l got into the cabriolet, and were able to find an excellent road not four yards from the place where they had spent the night. Half-way on the first stage, they debated as to where they should sleep. The awkward situation was that Madame reckoned on stopping with a gentleman whose house, unluckily, was shut up. It is true his brother lived quite near, but he was a Republican.

"Is he a trustworthy man?" asked the duchesse.

"The most trustworthy man I know!" replied M. de B——l.

"That is well! Then take me to him."

They wanted to argue the point with Madame.

"It is useless," she said, "I have decided to stop there."

Two hours later, Madame rang at the door of the political enemy of whom she had come to ask for shelter. Madame and her two travelling companions were shown into the salon.

"Whom shall I announce to monsieur?" the servant asked.

"Just ask him to come down," said the duchesse; "I will tell him who I am myself."

A minute later, the master of the house came into the salon. Madame went up to him.

"Monsieur," she said, "I am aware that you are a Republican, but an outlaw is allowed no opinions: I am the Duchesse de Berry."

The Republican bowed, put his house entirely at the disposal of the princess, and, after having passed one of her quietest and best nights there, Madame set off again the next day for a little village where she had a rendezvous with several of her partisans, and with M. de Bonnechose in particular. He was the same good excellent young fellow whose acquaintance, it will be recollected, I had made at Trouville.

Another carriage had to be procured, for M. de Bonnechose was not to leave the princess again; therefore, a four-seated char-à-banc was bought and the cabriolet left behind.

M. de B——l was leader of the party; he was seated near the princess on the first seat, protected by a screen; MM. de Ménars and de Bonnechose sat on the back seat.

During a rapid descent, edged on one side by rocks and on the other by a precipice, the horse ran away. It was night; after a violent shock, M. de Ménars and M. de Bonnechose suddenly saw a voluminous object fall from the hood of the carriage. Both believed it was Madame la duchesse de Berry, who had been shot out of the carriage by the

shaking: the object having human form lay motionless on the road; if it was the princess, she was either killed or grievously wounded. Unfortunately, there was no means of stopping the carriage; it continued its rapid descent for nearly a kilometre. At last the iron step, which had been forced out of place, came in contact with the roadway and made a kind of brake; M. de Bonnechose, young and light, jumped to the ground and sprang clear of the carriage; he found Madame very calm, with no other anxiety but that the wind had carried her mantle away. The carriage was badly damaged. They walked on foot to a blacksmith's forge, where the necessary repairs were made. The same day, the princess was received into the family of M. de B——l.

There it was she had fixed the first rendezvous, and all whom she had called to it were present; they urged that Madame should not go too far, but, on the contrary, retrace her steps and leave France. The princess replied with decision—

"If I left France without going to la Vendée what would the brave people of the West say, who have given so many proofs of devotion to the royal cause? They would never forgive me, and I should deserve the reproaches they have many times made to my relatives, even more than they deserve it![1] As I promised them, four years ago, to come amongst them in case of misfortune, and as I am already in France, I will not go out of it without keeping my promise. . . . We will start to-night; prepare for my departure."

The duchesse's friends renewed their entreaties; they enumerated the dangers she had run; but an argument of that nature was more likely to incite than to hinder.

"God and St. Anne will help me!" she said; "I have had a good night, and I am rested; I wish to start to-night."

[1] The reader knows Charette's letter to the Comte d' Artois after the defeat at Quiberon.

The order given, there was nothing else to be done but to obey it.

M. de B——l made preparations for this departure in the greatest secrecy. He procured a travelling carriage from the next village, which, on the following night, was to wait at a given hour and place; unluckily, it only had three seats in it. Madame chose to accompany M. de Ménars and M. de Villeneuve, a relative of the Marquis de B——l, and they set out the same evening.

M. de Villeneuve, known and respected throughout the South, was bearer of a passport for himself, his wife and one servant. M. de Lorge solicited the humble title of valet-de-chambre, and, at the hour for departure, came to offer his services to Madame in a suit of livery. It reminds one of Charles Edward at Culloden, and of Louis XVI. at Varennes. Madame held out her hand so that those who could not accompany her could salute it, assigned a rendezvous in the West, and left for la Vendée, where we shall follow her.

CHAPTER III

Madame's itinerary—Panic—M. de Puylaroque—*Domine salvum fac Philippum*—The château de Dampierre—Madame de la Myre—The pretended cousin and the curé—M. Guibourg—M. de Bourmont—Letter of Madame to M. de Coislin—The *noms de guerre*—Proclamation of Madame—New kind of *henna*—M. Charette—Madame is nearly drowned in the Maine—The sexton in charge of the provisions—A night in the stable—The Legitimists of Paris—They dispatch M. Berryer into la Vendée

THEY had to reach the place where the carriage was by narrow footpaths which were difficult and full of brambles; Madame lost her shawl among them. This was during the night between Thursday and Friday, 4 May. The carriage, brought by MM. de B——l and de Villeneuve, was waiting at the appointed place. The night was calm, silent and clear; although the moon was only in its first quarter, they could see for some distance. Now they thought they could perceive a man on horseback standing on the road. One of the gentlemen slipped among the hillocks and returned to announce that the man on horseback was a gendarme. At the same time, they began to hear the steps of a troop of horses, and could see the sparks flying from the still distant hoofs of the cavalry.

Should they depart like fugitives or boldly expose themselves by remaining? Madame was for the bold course! if they fled, no matter how quickly, they would be sure to be overtaken; if they stayed, and suspicion was not aroused, they had a chance by not awaking it.

The troop advanced at a fast trot, and they were soon

noticed. They were a dozen post-horses ridden by three postilions bringing back relays from some starting-place. Seeing Madame's carriage on the road, they offered their services. M. de B——l replied in Provençal patois thanking them, and they continued on their road. Behind them went the carriage, and the gendarme was behind that. M. de B——l, uneasy, followed, running on foot after the carriage. The gendarme gained upon the barouche, and was about to catch it up, when M. de B——l rushed to the door, saying—

"Here comes the gendarme; God protect you!"

Madame looked through the glass placed in the back of the carriage, and saw, indeed, that the gendarme was only a few yards away, regulating his horse's pace to that of the princess's horses. What could they think, except that this man, having seen a carriage stopped and surrounded by several individuals—and that at eleven o'clock at night—had conceived suspicions and, not daring to attack so numerous a company alone, wished to give the alarm to the first brigade he should meet on the road? M. de B——l could not run on foot the whole stage; so he stopped and sat by the roadside, waiting for news when the coachman should return. When the duchesse reached the posting inn where she had to take fresh horses, she looked anxiously around her. The gendarme had disappeared. No doubt he had gone to warn the brigade. They hurried the livery-stable keeper as much as they could, and set off with only two horses, in order to allay suspicions; but they were scarcely out of the village before they found the gendarme again. He looked like a fairy knight sprung out of the ground. The general opinion was that there was no gendarmerie station in the village which they had just passed through, and that they would be arrested at the next village. A few yards from the posting inn, the gendarme took a side road, and they never saw him again. When they reached the other side of the village, where they expected

to be arrested, and saw that the road was free, they breathed again.

"Well, what does Your Highness think about our gendarme?" asked M. de Villeneuve.

"Either he is a precious simpleton who does not know how to mind his own business," said the duchesse, "or he is a cunning blade who has recognised me; and who, if I succeed, has in his pocket already, in advance, his brevet as officer and some few hundred louis to equip himself with. In any case, he can brag of having put me in a great fright!"

M. de B——l learnt these details upon the return of the coachman, and went back home somewhat reassured. On 4 May, they continued on the way towards Toulouse, *via* Nîmes, Montpellier and Narbonne, travelling night and day, and only stopping early in the mornings for breakfast, to make her toilette and to give time for the stablemen to oil the carriage. They changed horses at Lunel.

"Where are we?" asked the princess.

"At Lunel, madame," replied M. de Villeneuve.

"Oh!" said she, "if that excellent D * * *, who sent me in Italy a cask of wine of his own growing, knew that I was stopping to change horses at this moment, how he would come running here! But we must not be imprudent."

They set off again without informing M. D * * *. On 5 May at 7.30 P.M., the Duchesse de Berry entered Toulouse in an open barouche, without any sort of disguise to prevent those who had seen her from recognising her. As usual, the carriage drew up before the posting inn; those who were out of work and the inquisitive soon came running up. Amongst these spectators was a young man of fashionable appearance, who gazed with an expression that was less that of idleness and more that of curiosity than other people's; Madame pretended to be asleep without, on her side, losing sight of him, and he fixed his gaze so persistently upon her.

"My dear Monsieur de Lorge," said Madame, whilst the horses were being changed, "go and bring me a hat which will shade my face more."

M. de Lorge leapt from his seat and made his way to a milliner's shop. The curious spectator followed him, entered the shop with him, came out with him and, touching him on the shoulder, he said—

"My dear de Lorge, Madame la duchesse de Berry is here."

"Well, yes, my dear Jules," replied the person whom he interrogated.

"Where is she going?"

"Into la Vendée."

"La Vendée is overrun with troops!"

"We know it."

"Then why go there? The provinces she is now travelling through afford more favourable chances; Madame can stay in Toulouse in all safety. In a moment's time I will have proved everything. . . . I absolutely must speak to her."

"Very well, so be it! Speak to her."

"Not at this moment; that would be imprudent. I will come in the carriage in your seat, and, when out of the town, we will confer together!"

M. de Lorge returned to the carriage, handed the new hat to the duchesse, climbed up nimbly to his seat, the person he had designated by the name of Jules took his place by him, to Madame's great astonishment, and the carriage set off again at a gallop. When outside the town, the newcomer leant towards Madame.

"Eh! Monsieur de Puylaroque," she exclaimed, "is it indeed you! Ah! now I know it is you, I am at peace. I am happy! How has it come about that we have met? It is Providence who has sent you, for I badly wanted to talk to you. I have lost half my skill; you will give it back to me."

"Whatever Your Highness wills; she knows that I am

entirely devoted to her; but, above all, I entreat you, Madame, not to go into Vendée! . . ."

"Where would you have me go?"

"Remain in Toulouse; there you will find rest and safety."

"I do not want either the one or the other; I am seeking for conflict. As regards what you say of la Vendée, nothing annoying will happen to me there. La Vendée, you say, is overrun with soldiers? So much the better! I knew a good number of those who were in the barracks; they will also know me and will not fire upon me, I will answer for it! I have promised my faithful Vendéens to go and visit them. I will fulfil my word; if circumstances which I cannot foresee compel me to make myself scarce, come and look for me and I will return to the South with you. But, as I am here in France, do not let us talk of going out of it."

When Madame had made up her mind, it was a foregone conclusion that she would stick to it.

M. de Puylaroque was, therefore, obliged to give up his plan; he left the carriage and returned to Toulouse. A week later, he started to rejoin Madame in la Vendée. When she left Toulouse, Madame went by Moissac and Agen, then she left the Bordeaux road to follow that *via* Villeneuve d'Agen, Bergerac, Sainte-Foy, Libourne and Blaye—Blaye, which, when it watched her pass through, kept dumb as to the future! They made for the château of the Marquis de Dampierre, who had not been forewarned of the visit he was about to receive; but he was an intimate friend of M. de Lorge, who took upon him to answer for his devotion. From this château, situated half-way between Blaye and Saintes, the duchesse intended to give notice to her friends in Paris of her arrival, to confer with the leaders of the future insurrection, and to issue her proclamations throughout la Vendée. But, before reaching the Marquis de Dampierre's château, they had to pass that of a relative of his, which was only separated

from the road by the river. There was a ferryboat to tempt the travellers. The adventurous spirit of Madame could not withstand the desire to pay a visit to the unknown friend; besides, M. de Villeneuve urged it. It was necessary to inquire there if M. le marquis de Dampierre was at home. They got down and crossed the ferry. M. de Villeneuve introduced himself, and presented the princess to the master of the château as his wife. They were just going to sit down to table, and proposed that M. and Madame de Villeneuve should share the breakfast; the proposal was acceded to. It was a Sunday; the master of the château, whilst waiting for breakfast, proposed to his guests to go to Mass. Dangerous as this was to Madame's incognito, it was impossible to refuse such a proposition. Madame went to church on foot, on her host's arm, passing through the crowd boldly, holding her head high. It is true that, when at church, the heat and fatigue overcame her, and the princess took advantage of the curé's sermon, which lasted an hour, to sleep for that hour.

The sound of chairs which follows the peroration of a sermon woke Madame, and she heard the "*Domine salvum fac regem* LUDOVICUM-PHILIPPUM" for the first time. After breakfast, they started on their journey again. In the evening of 7 May, the Duchesse de Berry arrived at the gate of the château de Dampierre. M. de Lorge got down and rang. In England, they know who is demanding entrance by the manner in which the visitor knocks. M. de Lorge rang in the aristocratic manner, as one who has no time to wait; M. de Dampierre himself appeared.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"I, de Lorge! open quickly! I have brought Madame la duchesse de Berry to you."

The master of the house took a jump backwards.

"The Duchesse de Berry!" he exclaimed. "What! Madame?"

"Yes, she herself. . . . Open!"

"But," M. de Dampierre continued, "you are unaware that I have a score of people staying with me, that they are in the salon and . . ."

"Monsieur," said the Duchesse de Berry, putting her head out of the door, "I think I have heard it said somewhere that you have a cousin who lives fifty leagues from here?

"Madame de la Myre; yes, Madame."

"Then open your door, monsieur, and present me to the personages in your society under the name of Madame de la Myre."

"Madame, pray believe," exclaimed M. de Dampierre, "that I have only raised these objections in your own interest; but if you do me the honour of insisting . . ."

"I do insist."

M. de Dampierre hastened to open the wicket. Madame jumped out of the carriage, put her arm within that of the master of the house, and made her way to the salon. It was empty. During the absence of M. de Dampierre, every one had retired to his own room.

When the Duchesse de Berry entered the salon, followed by M. de Ménars, M. de Villeneuve and M. de Lorge, who had divested himself of his suit of livery and resumed that of a gentleman once more, she found no one there but the mistress of the house, and two or three persons to whom the Duchesse and M. de Lorge were presented under the name of M. and Madame de la Myre.

Next evening, M. de Villeneuve, knowing Madame was in safety, again departed for Provence. The following day also, Madame underwent the second introduction at breakfast. No sort of doubt arose as to the identity of the counterfeit Madame de la Myre. On the following Sunday, the curé of the parish to which the château belonged, came, as usual, to dine with M. le Marquis de Dampierre, who presented Madame under his cousin's name, as he had done to his other guests. The curé

came towards the duchesse with the intention of bowing; but, when half-way across the intervening interval, he fixed his eyes on her, stopped, and his face assumed so comic an air of stupefaction, that the duchesse could not refrain from bursting out laughing. When Madame had visited Rochefort, in 1828, the good man had been presented to her, and he recognised her.

"My dear curé," M. de Dampierre said to him, "excuse me, but I really cannot refrain from asking you what there is in my cousin's face which attracts your gaze to it."

"Because, Monsieur le Marquis," said the curé, "because Madame, your cousin . . . Oh! but it is amazing! Yet it is impossible! for, in fact . . ."

The rest of the good curé's sentence was lost in a confused and unintelligible murmur.

"Monsieur," Madame said in her turn, addressing the worthy curé, "allow me to associate myself with my cousin in asking what is the matter."

"It is like," replied the curé, "like a leaf out of a vaudeville of Scribe, or one of Alexandre Duval's comedies; your Royal Highness resembles the cousin of M. le Marquis like . . . No, I am wrong; M. le Marquis's cousin resembles Your Royal Highness. That is not what I mean— Oh! but I could swear. . . ."

The duchesse lapsed into fits of laughter. But, at this moment, the dinner bell rang. M. de Dampierre, who saw what delight the good curé's surprise caused the duchesse, placed him opposite to her. The result was that, instead of dining, the curé never ceased looking at Madame, and repeating—

"Oh! but it is incredible! in truth I could have sworn it . . . but yet it is impossible!"

Rash and inconsequent as a child, Madame spent nine days at the château, and no one except the curé had any notion of questioning her identity as to name and cousinship. On the second day, a messenger set off for

la Vendée with three notes. In the first, the duchesse asked a man who was in her confidence to find her an undiscoverable hiding-place. The second was addressed to one of the principal Vendéen leaders, and was couched in these terms :—

" In spite of the check which we have just met, I am far from looking upon my cause as lost : I have infinite confidence in its justice. My intention, therefore, is to go on pleading unceasingly, and I beg my advocates to hold themselves in readiness to plead . . . on the first day."

The third note was addressed to M. Guibourg, and was specially remarkable for its laconicism. This is it.

" You will be told where I am ; come,without a moment's loss of time. Not a word to a single soul ! "

Thirty hours later, M. Guibourg was with the princess. Madame's first words were—

" Where is M. le maréchal de Bourmont ? "

No one knew, M. Guibourg knew no more than the rest. The maréchal was not at Nantes, and they did not know either the route he had taken, or the retreat in which he was hidden. Nothing could be done without M. de Bourmont, who was the soul of the enterprise ; he was the only person who, by the influence of his name, could make la Vendée rise, and, in virtue of his office of maréchal de France, exact the obedience of officers of all ranks. Madame had not heard a word of M. de Bourmont since the day she had parted from him.

" Come," she said cheerfully to M. Guibourg, " do not let us be cast down by small hindrances, we do not allow ourselves to be discouraged by reverses ; nevertheless, what is to be done ? "

" As Madame has persisted in burning her boats," replied M. Guibourg, " since she has made up her mind to come into la Vendée, where she is expected, I would counsel her to leave this château as quickly and secretly

as possible. The principal leaders from the two banks of the Loire can be rallied round Madame within forty-eight hours' time; Madame can make her purposes known to them, and, assisted by their advice, she can come to a decision."

"Very good!" said the duchesse, "you shall start to-morrow, and I will start the day after. Upon my arrival there, I will take counsel with the leaders you have informed."

But, next day, Madame called M. Guibourg to her.

"I have changed my mind," she said, "and do not intend to consult any one; the majority will be for an adjournment, and all risings in la Vendée must take place, I am told, during the first fortnight in May, the time when country pursuits give a holiday in some measure to the farmers; we are, then, late. Besides, in their interests, upon whose faith I have come, all the chiefs told me they were ready to act; to ask them if they are, will be to doubt their word. I am going, therefore, to make my intentions known to the whole of France. Here is the letter addressed to M. de Coislin:—

"Let my friends be reassured: *I am in France*, and soon *I shall be in la Vendée*; from there, my definite orders will come to you: you will receive them before the 25th of this month. Prepare, therefore. That was only a blunder and a mistake in the South; I am satisfied with their intentions; they will keep their promises. My faithful province of the West will never fail in theirs.—In a short time, the whole of France will be called upon to resume its ancient dignity and happiness. M. C. R.

"15 *May* 1832"

Added to this letter was the note containing the *noms de guerre* under which the conspirators were to hide themselves, and to correspond: as follows:—

"Guibourg—*Pascal*, the Maréchal—*Laurent*, Madame—*Mathurine*, Maquille—*Bertrand*, Terrien—*Cœur de Lion*, Clouët—*Saint-Amand*, Charles—*Antoine*, Cadoudal—*Bras-*

de-Fer, Cathelineau—*Le Jeune* or *Achille*, Charette—*Gaspard*, Hébert—*Doineville*, d'Autichamp—*Marchand*, de Coislin—*Louis Renaud.*"

The same day, Madame la duchesse de Berry had a few hundred copies of the following proclamation distributed, printed by a portable hand-press.

"*Proclamation of Madame la duchesse de Berry, régente de France*

"Vendéens, Bretons, and all inhabitants of the faithful provinces of the West! Having landed in the South, I have no fear of travelling in the midst of dangers through France to fulfil a sacred promise to come among my brave friends, and to share their perils and their labours. I am at last among this nation of heroes! *Make an opening for the fortune of France!* I place myself at your head, sure of victory when with such men as you. Henri V. appeals to you; his mother, regent of France, dedicates herself to your happiness. Some day, Henri V. will be your brother-at-arms if the enemy threaten our faithful country. Let us re-echo our old and our new cry: '*Vive le roi! Vive Henri V.!*'

MARIE-CAROLINE

"ROYAL PRINTING-HOUSE
OF HENRI V"

Preceded by this proclamation, Madame again started on her journey, 16 May 1832. She was accompanied by M. and Madame de Dampierre, by M. de Ménars and M. de Lorge, who had resumed his disguise of a servant's livery. M. de Dampierre's horses drove Madame as far as the first posting stage, where she took fresh ones and continued her journey by Saintes, Saint-Jean-d'Angely, Niort, Fontenay, Luçon, Bourbon and Montaigu.[1]

The Duchesse de Berry travelled in broad day and in an open carriage, through the country over which, four years before, she had passed on horseback, going from château to château, and surrounded by the people who collected during her progress. It was a miracle that M. de Ménars, landowner in the country,

accustomed to all the electors both as elector and candidate, past-president of the great college of Bourbon, was not recognised at every step. No doubt, both were protected by their very imprudence. It is true Madame wore a brown wig; but she had kept her own blond eyelashes with the brown wig. All at once her travelling companions noticed this, and pointed it out to her: such a discrepancy must be remedied as soon as possible. Madame moistened a corner of her handkerchief with saliva, rubbed it on M. de Ménars' boot, and, thanks to the boot blacking, obtained a suitable black wherewith to harmonise the colour of her eyebrows with that of her wig. At Montaigu, where they relayed horses, M. de Lorge, dressed as a servant, was obliged, in order not to belie his costume, to eat with the servants, and to help to harness the horses.

M. de Lorge got through his part as though he had been playing in amateur theatricals.

On 17 May, at noon, Madame and M. de Ménars alighted at M. de N * * *'s château; the two travellers at once changed costumes with the master and mistress of the house, who immediately got into the carriage in their place, and continued the journey with M. and Madame de D * * *. The postilion, whom the servants had made tipsy in the kitchen whilst the masters were exchanging dresses above, noticing nothing, being half-drunk, bestrode his horse and took the road for Nantes, never suspecting that his passengers had been changed, or, rather, that they had exchanged themselves. The duchesse had arranged a meeting-place for her friends in a house, situated about a league from the château, belonging to M. G * * *. Towards five in the afternoon, she took the arm of M. O * * * and reached this house with him on foot, where they were soon rejoined by MM. de Ménars and Charette. They were clad in blouses, and wore hob-nailed shoes. Madame left that night to reach a hiding-place they had contrived for her in the commune of Mont-

bert ; she was accompanied by M.M. de Ménars, Charette, and by la R * * * e. Four or five peasants escorted the travellers ; they asked of Madame whether she wished to make a détour, or to cross the Maine by the ford. As Madame wished to accustom herself to every kind of peril at one fell swoop, she chose dangers rather than slowness. They conferred together a moment as to where they should cross the river, and settled to cross it near Romainville, by a kind of bridge of piles, which afforded an indifferently good sort of ford. A peasant who knew the locality took the head of the column, sounding the path with a stick, which he held in his right hand, whilst, with his left, he drew the duchesse after him. When the peasant and Madame had got two-thirds across the river, they felt the pile crumble under their feet on which they had thought they might venture. They both tottered and fell into the water. Madame fell head over heels and disappeared, entirely submerged. M. Charette sprang in at once, caught her by the heel, and drew her from the river, but she had been under water for five or six seconds and had lost consciousness. Madame's companions would not let her go any farther ; they took her back to the house she had left. She changed all her clothes from head to foot, and decided to take the longer road, and to ride behind a peasant. On account of this détour, she did not reach the village of Montbert until 18 May. She had supper, and slept in the house which had been prepared for her. But the house was poorly furnished. The princess's companions did not like her to undergo the privations which such penury inflicted upon her ; they spoke to her of a celebrated provision dealer of Nantes, called Colin, who sold excellent conserves in tins for journeys of long distance. Madame agreed to give in to this sybaritism. They had to find an intelligent and discreet man to go and make their purchases, and suggested to Madame the parish sexton. Madame had a little chat with the man, who pleased her, and was charged with the commission.

They had relied on his prudence: he was too prudent. His purchases achieved, he told the provision merchant, in order to allay suspicions, to send the boxes to Pont-Rousseau, where he would await them. Now, whilst he was loading his horse with the boxes, a patriot passed by. Patriots generally have their eyes wide open on all occasions; but, in this instance, he of Nantes had his particularly wide open. Our man saw the tin boxes, took them for powder boxes, and imagined they were meant for the Chouans. Whilst the sexton loaded his remaining boxes, the patriot got the start and warned the gendarmerie of Souniers. They arrested the churchman in his transit, and took him back to Nantes. The boxes were opened and, instead of munition, they found vegetables; but, although vegetables may appear very inoffensive, to suspicious minds they have a certain signification. When the sexton was interrogated as to the rank in life of those who had charged him with this gastronomic commission, he replied that they were persons unknown to him, and that they waited on the heath of Génusson. He had indicated a point opposite to where the Duchesse de Berry really was. Some gendarmes went to the heath of Génusson, which, we may be very sure, was deserted. The sexton was taken to the prison of Nantes. A peasant had seen him amidst the gendarmes, and had taken to his heels to warn the duchesse. For greater safety, Madame left her hiding-place, as she knew the sexton too little to judge the length to which his devotion would run, and she took refuge in a stable. She there spent the night and day of the 19th with the farmer's oxen. One of these animals took a fancy to her, and came several times to breathe in her face.

"I want," she said, laughing at her situation the next day, "to be painted as soon as I can manage it, *tête-à-tête* with the fat ox which came so pleasantly to *puff* in my face."

Another ox had directed his affections towards M. de Ménars, and had spent the night licking his face; but M.

de Ménars was so tired that he had received the animal's caresses without waking.

In the midst of a terrible storm and beating rain, at 1 o'clock in the morning of 20 May, Madame left the farm to go to L——e, an occupied country house, belonging to the family of la R——e, situated in the commune of Saint-Philibert. The roads were fearful, and a deep bog intersected the way; they could only advance across the miry marsh by sounding the way step by step. M. Charette had committed Madame to the care of his young comrade, de la R——e, to whose home they were going; so, in order to cross the dangerous passage, the young man wished to trust to his own devices; he took Madame on his shoulders and, when risking his first step in the marsh, he said—

"Madame, it is possible that I may sink and disappear in some peat-bog; but, directly you see me about to disappear, throw yourself to one side with as quick and strong a movement as you can; the dangerous spots are not usually large; I shall be lost, but you will be saved!"

Twice this nearly happened, twice Madame felt M. de la R——e sink up to his waist; but each time, happily, he succeeded in extricating himself from the predicament. Madame arrived at daybreak and, tired out as she was, she set out in the evening, after having had lunch and some sleep, to receive some persons from the country side, and to have much joking over the two unprincely kinds of death to which she had nearly succumbed. This new stage took her to a sister of M. de la R——e. Her hostess did not in the least expect the visit, and was not overjoyed at receiving her.

On the night of the 21st, the duchesse set off again; she had to reach the M—— commune of Leyé. She stayed there until Monday the 31st, that is to say for ten days. The house was inconvenient, and it was not a safe retreat; moving columns were constantly passing by the door; and it was evident that suspicions were aroused. But

still the rendezvous was given to M. de Bourmont, M. Berryer and M. R——. They were obliged to attend. The letter written by the duchesse to the Royalists had reached its destination; only, Madame had forgotten to give the key of the cipher note which accompanied it. M. Berryer set to work to discover it, and found it. It was the sentence *Le gouvernement provisoire*, substituted by the twenty-four letters of the alphabet.

Madame's letter had caused great trouble among the idle Royalists planted in the central rays of light in Paris; they knew public opinion more clearly than the Royalists of Maine and la Vendée and the Loire-Inférieure; though it was true that the government of King Louis-Philippe was becoming more and more unpopular, yet, that was a reason for waiting, and not for hurrying things on; as to hoping for anything from Madame's attempt, nobody was blind enough to flatter himself on that score.

Accordingly, the Parisian Royalists met together on the evening of the 19th, to consider the best means of making Madame acquainted with the true situation of matters in France. It was a serious and almost depressing meeting; they looked upon the danger as imminent, and consequently agreed that one of the principal leaders should go to la Vendée to the princess. MM. de Chateaubriand, Hyde de Neuville and Berryer were the three heads. MM. de Chateaubriand and Hyde de Neuville were the objects of a surveillance which it was difficult to baffle; it would be guessed where they were going before they could reach Orléans, and they would be arrested or followed. M. Berryer offered to execute the commission. A lawsuit called him to the assizes at Vannes early in June. A note drawn up by M. de Chateaubriand, giving an epitome of the opinion, if not of the majority, yet of the bulk, of the meeting, was put in his hands. The rest was left to his devotion and his eloquence. His business was to make Madame leave la Vendée. He

left Paris on the morning of 20 May, and reached Nantes on the 22nd. Let us be permitted to follow the famous orator in his picturesque journey through bye lanes, in the heart of thickets and hedges; we will answer for the accuracy of the details, which were given to us in 1833 by M. Berryer himself.

CHAPTER IV

Interview between MM. Berryer and de Bourmont—The messenger's guides—The movable column—M. Charles—Madame's hiding-place—Madame refuses to leave la Vendée—She rallies her followers to arms—Death of General Lamarque—The deputies of the Opposition meet together at Laffitte's house—They decide to publish a statement to the nation—MM. Odilon Barrot and de Cormenin are commissioned to draw up this report—One hundred and thirty-three deputies sign it

HARDLY had M. Berryer reached Nantes, before he learnt that M. de Bourmont had been there a couple of days. He went to see him immediately. M. de Bourmont had received the order of 15 May, relative to the taking up of arms, fixed for the 24th, but he agreed with M. Berryer, after what he had seen and heard during his short stay at Nantes, that there was no hope to be placed on that insurrection, which he regarded as a *deplorable affray*. It was so much his own opinion, that he had taken upon himself to send *almost* a counter-order to the Vendéen chiefs, hoping that when he saw Madame he should succeed in inducing her to give up her plans. The counter-order had been transmitted by M. Guibourg to M. de Coislin *père*, who, in his turn, was to tell those whom it concerned. This is the letter from M. Guibourg, and the copy of the order of M. de Bourmont—

"MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS,—I have the honour to send you a copy of the order that I am deputed to hand you on behalf of M. le Maréchal :—

"'Delay the execution of the orders you have received for the 24th May for a few days, and do not let anything

visible be seen until you have fresh news, but continue your preparations.

"'LE MARÉCHAL COMTE DE BOURMONT

"'*22 May, noon*'"

M. de Bourmont, therefore, approved of M. Berryer's reason for going to Madame, and all was prepared the same day for his departure. At two o'clock in the afternoon, M. Berryer got into a little hired trap, and, as he did so, he asked the confidential person whom the duchesse had at Nantes what route he should take, and where Madame was living, whereupon the man pointed with his finger to a peasant hanging about at the end of the street on a dapple-grey horse, and said merely, "You see that man? You only have to follow him."

Indeed, hardly had the man on the grey horse seen M. Berryer's carriage start before he put his mount to a trot, which allowed the former to follow him without losing sight of him. In this way they crossed the bridges and entered the country. The peasant did not even turn his head, and seemed to trouble so very little about the carriage to which he served as guide, that there were moments when M. Berryer thought himself the dupe of some mystification or other. As for the driver, who was not in his confidence, he could give no other directions when he asked: "Where are we going, master?" than, "Follow that man." The driver obeyed this injunction strictly, not busying himself henceforth any more over the guide, than the guide troubled himself over him.

After a journey of two and a half hours, which were not without disquiet for M. Berryer, they reached a little hamlet. The man on the grey horse stopped before the inn: M. Berryer did the same; one got down from his horse, the other from his carriage, to continue the road on foot. M. Berryer told his driver to wait until 6 o'clock in the evening of the next day, and then he followed his strange guide. After going a hundred yards, he entered a house, and as, during the journey, M. Berryer had gained

upon him, the former entered it almost at the same time. The man opened the door of the kitchen, where the mistress of the house was alone, and pointing to M. Berryer, who walked behind him, he only said the words—

"Here is a gentleman who must be guided."

"He shall be guided," replied the mistress of the house.

Scarcely had she uttered these words before the guide opened the door and left, without giving M. Berryer time to thank him, or to exchange a word or to pay him. The mistress of the house signed to the traveller to be seated, and, without addressing a single word to him, continued to apply herself to her household affairs as though no stranger was present.

A silence of three-quarters of an hour went by after the strict politeness of M. Berryer's reception, and it was only broken by the arrival of the master of the house. He bowed to the stranger without displaying either surprise or curiosity; only, he looked at his wife, who repeated to him from where she stood, and without interrupting what she was doing, the same words that the guide had used, "Here is a gentleman who must be guided."

Whereupon, the master of the house threw at his guest one of those uneasy, sharp, quick glances, which are characteristic of the Vendéen peasantry; then his face resumed the expression of good nature and simplicity which was native to it. He advanced towards M. Berryer, hat in hand.

"Monsieur desires to travel in our country?" he said to him.

"Yes, I want to go further."

"Monsieur no doubt has his papers?"

"Yes."

"In order?"

"Perfectly."

"And in his own name, I presume?"

"In my own name."

"If monsieur will show them to me, I will tell him if he can travel quietly in our country."

"Here they are."

The peasant took them and ran his eye over them; he had no sooner caught the name of M. Berryer than he folded them up again, saying—

"Oh, that is all right! Monsieur can go anywhere with those papers."

"You will take upon you to provide me with a guide?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"I want one as soon as possible."

"I will go and saddle the horses."

At these words, the master of the house went out and, ten minutes later, re-entered.

"The horses are ready."

"And the guide?"

"He waits for monsieur."

And, as a matter of fact, M. Berryer found a farm lad at the door already mounted, and holding a horse by the hand; scarcely had he put his foot into the stirrups before his new conductor started as silently as his predecessor had done. After two hours' riding, during which no word was exchanged between M. Berryer and his guide, they arrived towards nightfall at the door of one of the farmsteads which are honoured with the name of a château. It was half-past eight in the evening; M. Berryer and his guide got down from their horses, and both went inside. The farm lad addressed a servant, and said to him—

"This gentleman wishes to speak to monsieur."

The master was asleep; he had spent the previous night at a rendezvous, and the day on horseback; he was too tired to get up: one of his relatives came down in his stead. He welcomed M. Berryer and, directly he had learnt his name and the object of his journey, he gave orders for departure. He himself undertook to serve as guide to the traveller, and, ten minutes later,

both left on horseback: in a quarter of an hour's time, a cry sounded a hundred yards in front of them; M. Berryer trembled, and asked what it was.

"It is our scout," replied the Vendéen chief; "he is asking in his own fashion if the way is clear. Listen, and you will hear the reply." At these words, he stretched out his hand, and put it on M. Berryer's arm to make him pull his horse up. A second cry then went up, coming from a greater distance off; it seemed like the echo of the first, so like was it.

"We can go forward, the road is free," replied the chief, putting his horse to the spur.

"Then we are preceded by a scout?"

"Yes, we have one man two hundred yards ahead of us and another the same distance behind."

"But who are the people who answer?"

"The peasants whose cottages lie along the road. Pay attention when you pass by one of them, and you will see a little dormer-window open and a man's head slip out, stay motionless for an instant as if he were a stone, and only disappear when we are out of sight. If we were soldiers from some neighbouring cantonment, the man who will only look at us as we pass would immediately come out by a back door; then, if there were any gathering in the district, he would soon warn it of the approach of the column which believed it was about to take it by surprise."

At this moment, the Vendéen chief interrupted himself.

"Listen," he whispered, stopping his horse.

"What is it?" said M. Berryer. "I only heard the usual cry of our scout."

"Yes, but no other cry has replied to it; there are soldiers in the neighbourhood."

He put his horse into a trot upon these words, and M. Berryer did the same; almost at the same instant, the man who formed the rear-guard caught them up at a gallop. They found their guide motionless and un-

decided at the forking of the two roads. The path desected and, as no one had answered his cry from either side, he did not know which of the footpaths he must take; both would lead the travellers to their destination. After a minute's deliberation in low tones between the chief and the guide, the latter plunged out of sight into the dark alley to the right; five minutes afterwards, M. Berryer and the chief started at a walk along the same path, leaving their fourth companion motionless at the place they left, and five minutes later he also followed them. Three hundred yards further on, M. Berryer and the chief found that their scout had stopped; he signed to them to command silence, and said in a whisper—"A patrol!" They could, indeed, hear the regular step of a troop on the march; it was a moving column which was making its nightly round. The noise soon came nearer to them, and they saw against the sky the outline of the soldiers' bayonets, who, in order to avoid the water which collected in the deep paths, had followed neither of the two roads, the bifurcation of which had caused the guide a momentary hesitation, but had climbed the slope, and were walking between the two hedges, on the ground which overlooked the two sunk footpaths by which it was enclosed. Had a single one of the four horses neighed, the little troop would have been taken prisoners; but they seemed to understand the position of their masters, and kept silence like them, so the soldiers went on unsuspecting whom they had closely passed by. When the sound of their steps was lost in the distance, the travellers resumed their march. At half-past ten o'clock, they turned off the road and entered a wood. The little band got down and left the horses under the care of the two peasants, while M. Berryer and the chief went on their way alone. They were not very far distant from the farmhouse where Madame was; but, as they wanted to enter by a back door, they had to make a détour, and to cross through some marshes

where they sank almost up to their knees; at last the dark little mass of buildings which formed the farmstead, surrounded with trees, appeared, and soon they reached the door. The chief knocked in a particular way. Steps approached, and a voice asked, "Who is there?" The chief replied with the agreed-upon word, and the door was opened. An old woman performed the office of concierge; but she was accompanied, for greater security, by a tall, robust fellow, armed with a stick, which, in such hands as his, would have proved as formidable as any other weapon.

"We want M. Charles," said the chief.

"He is asleep," replied the old woman; "but he told us to inform him if any one came. Go into the kitchen while I wake him."

"Tell him it is M. Berryer who has come from Paris," added the latter.

The old woman left them in the kitchen and went away. The travellers went close up to the huge fireplace, where a few embers left of the day's fire still remained. One end of a beam was fixed into the chimney place, whilst the other end was held tight in a kind of claw made by a crack—it was one of those pieces of inflammable firwood, used in Vendéen cottages instead of a lamp or candle. In ten minutes' time, the old woman came in and told M. Berryer that M. Charles was ready to receive him, and that she had come to lead him to him. He thereupon followed her, and ascended behind her a wretched staircase, which was outside the house, and seemed to be fixed along the wall, till he reached a small room on the first floor, the only one, indeed, which was at all habitable in the miserable farmhouse. This room was occupied by the Duchesse de Berry. The old woman opened the door, and, remaining outside, shut it after M. Berryer. His attention was at first entirely taken up by Madame. She was lying on a poor, coarsely carved, worm-eaten wooden bedstead, in very fine linen sheets, covered with a

Scotch shawl of red and green plaid; she had on one of those muslin nightcaps worn by the women of the country, with lappets falling on the shoulders. The walls were bare; a miserable white-washed fireplace warmed the room, which, in the way of furniture, only contained a table covered with papers, upon which rested two brace of pistols: in one corner of the apartment there was a chair on which had been flung the complete dress of a young peasant, and a black wig.

We have said that the object of the interview between M. Berryer and the duchesse was to persuade the latter to leave France; but, as we cannot report the details of that conversation concerning general interests without compromising private interests, we will pass it over in silence; as we have made our readers well acquainted with the men and things of this period, they will easily fill them in for themselves. Only by three o'clock in the morning did Madame give in to the arguments which M. Berryer had taken upon his own responsibility to convey to her. Although the duchesse could see for herself that there was but little chance of success attending an armed insurrection, it was not without crying and despair that she yielded.

"Very well, it is settled," she said, "I am to quit France; but I shall not come back to it again, take heed, for I do not wish to return with foreigners; they are but waiting for a chance, as you well know, and the moment will come: they will come and ask for my son—not that they will trouble themselves much more over him than they did over Louis XVIII. in 1813, but it will be a means for them to have a share in Paris. Very well, then, they shall not have my son! for nothing in this world shall they have him; I will rather carry him away into the mountains of Calabria! Look here, Monsieur Berryer, if it is necessary to buy the throne of France by the cession of a province, a town, a fortress or a cottage, like that

in which I am, I give you my word, as regent and as mother, he shall never be king."

Finally, Madame made up her mind. M. Berryer took leave of her at four in the morning, taking with him her promise to rejoin him at noon in the second house he had put up at, which was situated four country leagues from the place where he had left his coachman. When the duchesse arrived there, she was to get into the little hired conveyance, and to return to Nantes in the company of M. Berryer, there to take coach with her fictitious passport, and, travelling right through France, to go out of it by the Mont Cenis route. M. Berryer stopped at the place agreed upon, and waited there for Madame from noon until six o'clock. Only then did he receive a message from her; the duchesse had changed her decision. She wrote to him that she had linked too many interests to hers, drawn too many lives to her own lot, to escape alone from the consequences of her descent into France, and to leave them pressing upon others; that, therefore, she had decided to share to the end the fate of those whom she had implicated; only, the taking up of arms, at first fixed for 24 May, was put off till the night of the 3rd to the 4th of June.

M. Berryer returned to Nantes in consternation. On the 25th, M. de Bourmont received a letter from the duchesse confirming what she had written to M. Berryer; as follows:—

"Having resolutely determined not to leave the Western provinces, and to entrust myself to fidelity of long standing, I count on you, my good friend, to take all the necessary measures for the taking up of arms, which will take place during the night of 3rd to 4th June. I call to my aid all courageous people; God will help us to save our country! No danger, no fatigue will dishearten me; I shall put in my appearance at the first rallying.

"MARIE-CAROLINE, *Regent of France*

"VENDÉE, 25 *May* 1832"

Immediately upon receipt of this letter, M. de Bourmont wrote a note to M. de Coislin in the following terms :—

"As Madame has courageously resolved not to abandon the country, and is rallying round her all who wish to preserve France from the misfortunes which threaten her, make known to all that they are to hold themselves ready on Sunday, 3 June, and that they arrange throughout the following night to act together, according to the directions we have given. Make very certain your orders are conveyed to everybody and to all points.

"MARÉCHAL COMTE DE BOURMONT"

This, then, was how things were in la Vendée when the report of the death of General Lamarque ran through Paris. It followed that of Casimir Périer by only a few days: the two strong athletes were rudely strangled during their struggles in the Tribune, which seem to have killed them both. But the soldier survived the tribune by a few days. The impression produced by these two deaths was very different: nothing could be compared with the unpopularity of the one, and the popularity of the other. This death coincided with the famous affair of the *compte rendu*. We live so fast, and the gravest events pass over so quickly, that oblivion comes as rapidly as nightfall. Not one young man of thirty knows definitely to-day what the affair of the *compte rendu* was that we indicate was of so grave a nature.

After M. Laffitte gave up the seals of power, he returned to the Opposition; this was simple enough, since it was in order to bring about an easy reaction that Louis-Philippe had banished his prime minister and his old friend. M. Laffitte's Opposition was the most Conservative imaginable from the standpoint of enlightened politics. If anything could add to the duration of the reign, condemned in advance, it was the plan expounded by him to his co-religionists on the Left: this theory, of which M. Laffitte was the High Priest, and M. Odilon Barrot the Apostle, consisted in recovering possession of power by

the help of a parliamentary majority, to make the infusion of political clemency triumphant, and to make the monarchy *definitively*—the word is Louis Blanc's—guardian over liberty; a narrow but honest dream, which, compelled to tread between reaction and insurrection, could never become a reality.

As for the Radical deputies, they were divided into two representative shades of opinion, the most advanced led by Garnier-Pagès, the other by M. Mauguin; their object was to renew a sort of league after the type of those of the Guises, with the object of leading the Bourbon monarchy unconsciously, in 1836 or 1837, to be what the Valois monarchy of 1585 or 1586 had been.

To sum up, with the exception of those who have since been called the *centriers*, the *ventrus* and the *satisfaits*, that is to say, that ruminant kind of being which looks in all times towards the trough of the Budget and the rack of the Civil List, everybody was dissatisfied. All the malcontents, desirous of a change, whether of system or of persons, but who only desired to reach such changes by constitutional means, gathered together during the month of May at M. Laffitte's to attempt a last supreme effort. Pure Republicans who, on the contrary, only admitted insurrectionist methods, and marched separately in their strength and liberty, sleeping on their arms, took no part whatever in this meeting, the leaders of which were MM. Laffitte, Odilon Barrot, Cormenin, Charles Comte, Mauguin, Lamarque, Garnier-Pagès and La Fayette. The last three sailed by the limits of Constitutional and Republican opposition, quite closely, not indeed so near as to belong to our camp, that of militant Republicanism, but near enough to let themselves be drawn along with it. The meeting at Laffitte's was composed of upwards of forty deputies. M. Laffitte spoke and summed up the situation with the threefold clearness of the orator, the financier and man of honour, and he suggested an address to the king. It was the old method,

always repulsed, but always returning to the charge, under the name of *parliamentary remonstrances* in the time of absolute monarchy, and by the title of an *address* in the time of constitutional monarchy.

Garnier-Pagès, a just, incisive character, had but two words to say with which to fight the proposition victoriously. Could any one not mad conceive the illusion that royalty would consent to admit itself guilty, to recognise its errors and to make honourable amends to the nation? No, the monarchy and the nation were in a complete state of rupture. The nation must be appealed to concerning the errors of the monarchy. Garnier-Pagès would go so far as to term those errors treasons, and this sent a shudder down the spines of certain deputies of the Opposition. The upshot of the meeting was that the Opposition put its grievances before the nation under the form of a report. A commission was appointed, consisting of MM. La Fayette, Laffitte, Cormenin, Odilon Barrot, Charles Comte and Mauguin. MM. de Cormenin and Odilon Barrot were given the task of each drawing up the report separately; they would decide finally whether to choose either report or to destroy both reports. The work of each of the two editors bore signs of his own individual characteristics: M. de Cormenin too much recalled the bold pamphleteer who signed himself *Timon le Misanthrope*. M. Odilon Barrot, on the contrary, seemed too exclusively to bind up the future of France with the monarchical form of government. Neither of the two plans was adopted. It was decided to unite MM. de Cormenin and Barrot's two reports into one, or, rather, to draw up the manifesto in common, and it strongly resembled a declaration of war. Both left for Saint-Cloud in the morning and returned with the manifesto in the evening. It was in M. de Cormenin's handwriting; but it was easily seen that Odilon Barrot had had a great deal to do in the drawing up. However, whatever the share M. Barrot had in this work, the report

assumed the character, if not exactly of a threat, at least of a severe and solemn warning. It appeared on 28 May 1832. One hundred and thirty-three deputies had signed it. It made a profound impression, and the death of General Lamarque, one of the principal signatories to the manifesto, threw a dark and almost mysterious shade upon the situation, such as the hand of death seems to cast over certain fatal days.

CHAPTER V

Last moments of General Lamarque—What his life had been—One of my interviews with him—I am appointed one of the stewards of the funeral cortège—The procession—Symptoms of popular agitation—The marching past across the place Vendôme—The Duke Fitz-James—Conflicts provoked by the town police—The students of the École Polytechnique join the cortège—Arrival of the funeral procession at the pont d'Austerlitz—Speeches—First shots—The man with the red flag—Allocution of Étienne Arago

ON 1 June, at half-past eleven in the evening, General Lamarque had breathed his last. His death was a great event. At that period the Republican party used Napoleon's name as a weapon. Now, General Lamarque—a thing which would be much more difficult to define now than in those days, when people judged much more by instinct than by education—General Lamarque was, at that time, a supporter of the Empire and also of liberty, a soldier of Napoleon and a friend of La Fayette. Napoleon, it will be remembered, had made him Maréchal de France at Saint-Helena. Neither the Bourbons of the Elder Branch, nor those of the Younger, had had sufficient intelligence to ratify the appointment; but, in the eyes of France, it was, indeed, one of her maréchals who had just died. Then, too, there was really something grand about his death, by reason of the circumstances under which it happened and the particular incidents which had accompanied it. A multitude of sayings after the style of Cato and Leonidas were quoted that General Lamarque had said on his deathbed. He died heroically and yet regretting life. The thought which

had dwelt in his heart as long as it beat was—" I have not done enough for France ! "

The illness of which the general died seemed to deceive the doctors; sometimes the invalid appeared to be on the high way to convalescence and the bulletin of his health would announce the good news to his friends ; sometimes a fatal crisis put the sick man further back than the improvement had carried him. He himself was never deceived by these passing improvements. His friends, Drs. Lisfranc and Broussais, attended him with the devotion both of science and of friendship.

" My friends," the general invariably said to them, " I am grateful for your care ; I am touched by it, but you will not vanquish the disease ! You have hope and you want me to hope ; in vain, I feel I shall succumb."

Then, a minute later, he added with a sigh—

" Ah ! I am sorry to die ! I should have liked to serve France still longer. . . . And, too, I am specially disappointed not to be able to measure swords with Wellington, who made his reputation by the defeat he inflicted at Waterloo ; I have made a study of him ; I knew his tactics and I am quite sure I should have beaten him ! "

Laffitte went to see him as often as his busy life allowed. At the last visit he paid him, France alone was the leading topic of conversation.

" Oh ! my friend ! my friend ! " the invalid said, as he said goodbye to him, " reserve your strength for France ; she alone is great ! We are all small. . . . But," he added, weighed down by a never-ceasing idea, " I depart still full of regret that I have not been able to avenge my country for the infamous treaties of 1814 and 1815."

It was General Lamarque who uttered the sublime phrase that was flung at an orator who was boasting of the peace which had been brought about with the return of the Bourbons—

" The peace of 1815 is no peace ; it is a halt in the mud ! "

General Exelmans, the other old war comrade who was

to survive him by twenty years to die from a fall off his horse, came also to see him, and to try to restore hope, which, as we have said, had long before died in the heart of the invalid.

"What matter," he exclaimed, in a kind of impatience, "what matter that I die, provided my country lives?"

In a moment of discouragement, when he saw open before him the grave, which had swallowed up much patriotism, he had the sword of honour brought to him which had been given him by the officers of the Hundred Days, whose cause he had pleaded with much fervour and great success; then, sitting up in bed, he drew the sword from its scabbard, looked at it a long time, laid it across his knees, and finally carried it to his lips, saying—

"My dear officers of the Hundred Days! They gave it me to be used, and I have not used it!"

Once, overcome by grief, in the presence of Dr. Lisfranc, he made an onslaught against the impotent art which we call medicine. Suddenly, perceiving before whom he was speaking, he said—

"I curse medicine, but I bless doctors, who do a lot with the small amount of knowledge which science places in their hands. Embrace me, Lisfranc, and do not forget that I loved you very much!"

His last moments were, as we see, worthy of a soldier; he had struggled against death as Leonidas against Xerxes; his bed had been the battlefield. An hour before he died, in the agony which his sufferings betrayed by his starts and shudderings, he opened his eyes, which had been closed for thirty-six hours, and three times he uttered the two words: "Honour! Country!"—the two words engraved on the Cross of the Legion of Honour. He breathed his last an hour after he had uttered the cry which had been that of his whole lifetime.

It is said that a dying man achieves greatness; it is true, both morally as well as physically. General Lamarque increased enormously in greatness in everybody's eyes.

They remembered the boy volunteer of nineteen, the young captain of the famous infernal column, bringing to the Convention a strip of flag taken from the enemy, and winning from that great and terrible Assembly a vote pronouncing Captain Lamarque to have deserved well from his country. How splendid his military life had been through the thirty years that had passed since then !

They remembered Caprée, Calabria, the Tyrol and Wagram, where he broke the Austrian army three times ; they recalled and extolled his struggles each day in Catalogne, against Wellington, who never conquered him and whom he hoped to conquer. Then, too, his political life, as a member of the Tribune, was none the less fine ; his presence in all the struggles in the Chamber ; his voice always raised on behalf of the honour and defence of France ; his entreaties in favour of liberty when it was threatened ; his cries of alarm each time he saw the Revolution compromise ; ill and weak as he was up to the day he took to his bed, he never kept silence or yielded when any question of national honour arose.

When General Foy died, he at least left us Lamarque, as Miltiades left Themistocles. When General Lamarque died, he left behind him the heritage of a race of warriors which has given generals to the battlefield and tribunes to the Chamber. In spite of all the right he had to public recognition, the Government of Louis-Philippe, who only regarded General Lamarque as an enemy, and rejoiced at the fall of an enemy, only accorded to his obsequies the tribute of honour strictly due to the political and military position of a general ; all the funeral arrangements were left to the pious care and to the responsibility of his friends and family.

I was made a steward by the family and had the charge of seeing that the artillery took its proper place behind the funeral car. This honour was, in a way, a souvenir which the dead bequeathed to the living. In common with General Foy and General La Fayette, General Lamarque

had been very friendly to me, due, indeed, more to memory of my father than to my own personal valour. But still, when he knew, about the close of 1830, that I had returned from la Vendée, where I had been sent by General La Fayette, he begged me to go and see him. We talked for long of the Vendée as he had known it in 1815, when he was going on a mission from a fresh government; I told him all I thought about it, namely, that, some day or other, it threatened to rise in revolt. Every word of mine answered to some foresight of his own. I traced out my journey for him with blackheaded pins and indicated the probable places where there would be gatherings. He left for Nantes on the following day. But they did not let him reach his destination; at Angers he was stopped by an order recalling him.

We believe this measure was the result of those niggardly schemes which the ministry of Casimir Périer labelled with the title of wide political vision, and I believe I am not wrong in applying to him the same explanation that I did not hesitate to apply to Louis-Philippe, after the interview I had the honour to have with him upon our return from Vendée.

The revolution of 1830 had been so sudden that, for a moment, we Republicans thought it was complete; the report of its arms and its cries of liberty had reverberated throughout Belgium, Italy and Poland; three nations rose and cried, "France, come to our aid!" An appeal like this France always listens to, and General La Fayette replied in the name of France. The most lively and popular sympathy had, moreover, burst forth in our towns and countrysides in favour of revolutions carried out on our own lines; partial and distant eruptions of that great volcano whose crater is in Paris, and which seems at times extinct, like Etna, but, as deceptive as Etna, is always burning! Shouts of "*Vivent l'Italie, la Belgique et la Pologne!*" filled our streets and entered everywhere through the windows

and doors of royal and ministerial palaces. It was scarcely three months after the Revolution; at that period all still glowed with the sun of the Three Days, the grand voice of the people was still listened to, and the Government only had to promise through General La Fayette, as we have said above, for the nations of Belgium, Italy and Poland to be kept from perishing. And we heard the cries of joy of these foreign patriots in less than four months change to cries of distress. But what other could we expect? Let them succour Italy by sending one of the old generals, who would have shown them the way to make a new army, and Poland by diverting the Czar's plans, by inciting—an easy task for us—Turkey on one side and Persia on the other. Thus caught in a triangle of fire, we should leave Russia to contend, and we should divide between our two neighbour nations the most effective aid of our presence and of our arms. The people, true and profound of instinct, would thus feel, without being able to account for the means, the three probable results, and they would receive with shouts of joy the proclamation of the ministerial system of non-intervention, and the royal promise that the Polish nationality should not perish.

Advanced as were the ministers of Louis-Philippe's kingdom, they must either go to war or forswear it: by making war, they would get into trouble with kings; by forswearing it, they would get into trouble with the people. One way only remained: to prove to the country that it had too much to do in respect of its own affairs to busy itself in meddling with those of others; it was like giving to France an internal fever, as we have already said; through being taken up with its own sufferings it would have more sympathy for those of others. A small civil war in la Vendée would help its outlook wonderfully. It was therefore necessary to send far out of that country, upon which they wished to experiment, all strong men who might compromise movements from their beginnings,

and all shrewd men who might guess the real cause of those movements.

Now, Lamarque was both a strong man and a far-seeing one ; so they did not give him time to arrive on the scene of civil war. It was to these circumstances I owed the honour of coming in contact with General Lamarque and of not being forgotten by the family at the time of rendering the last honours to the conqueror of Caprée. I went to tell my friends Bastide and Godefroy Cavaignac of my appointment, and asked them if they had arranged anything for the morrow. They had a meeting at Étienne Arago's for the same evening, who, as I have previously said, was lieutenant in the 12th Legion of Artillery, and who, in case of a triumphant insurrection, was designed by a secret organisation to be mayor of the first arrondissement ; the son of the noted barrister Bernard (of Rennes), was his associate. Arago lived in Bernard's house, which was at the corner of the place and rue des Pyramides. Nothing was settled at this meeting ; no sort of plan was drawn up or scheme fixed upon : each one was left to his own devices to act according to circumstances. Nevertheless, the detachment of artillery commanded for the funeral cortège appeared armed at the house of mourning and provided themselves with cartridges.

On 5 June, the day fixed for the funeral, I went at eight in the morning to the general's house, in the faubourg Saint-Honoré. In my capacity as steward I had no rifle, nor, consequently, any cartridges. There were already, by eight o'clock, over three thousand persons in front of the house. I saw a group of young people who were preparing a kind of ammunition-waggon with ropes. I went up to them and asked them what they were busy with. "They were arranging the ropes," they replied, "with which to draw the funeral car." At the same time, they informed me that General Lamarque's body was lying in state in his sleeping-room and that people were defiling past the bed of state. I went

and put myself in the queue and filed past in my turn. The general in full uniform was laid on his bed, with his gloved-hand on his bare sword; he had a fine head, and his dignity was increased by the majesty of death. Those who passed by did so in silence and veneration, stooping as they reached the foot of the bed and sprinkling holy water on the corpse with a bough of laurel. I passed by as the rest did and went back into the street again. I was extremely weak from the effect of the cholera, I had lost all my appetite and scarcely ate an ounce of bread a day. The day promised to be a fatiguing one: so I went into my friend Hiraux's, whose café was, as we know, at the corner of the rues Royale and Saint-Honoré, and I waited until the time for departure, trying to take a cup of chocolate. At eleven, a rolling of drums called me to my post. They had just brought down the coffin under the great gate, shrouded with black. All the various elements which go to the formation of a funeral procession rolled along the rue and faubourg Saint Honoré —National Guards, workmen, artillerymen, students, old soldiers, refugees of all countries, citizens from every town; leaving, like a twin lake, their waves rolling across the place de la Madeleine and the place Louis XV. At the roll of the drums, all this crowd disentangled itself and every one rallied round his own leader, flag and banner. Many only had laurel or oak branches for banners and flags. All this passed before the eyes of the four squadrons of carabiniers who occupied the place Louis XV. The 12th Light Infantry waited at the other end of Paris on the very place de la Bastille. The Municipal Guard, on its side, was placed at intervals along the route which extended from the Préfecture de Police to the Panthéon. A detachment of the same guard protected the Jardin des Plantes. A squadron of dragoons covered the place de Grève with a battalion of the 3rd Light. Finally, a detachment of soldiers of the same troop stood ready to mount their horses at the Célestins barracks. The remain-

ing troops were confined in their respective barracks, and orders were given that regiments from Rueil, Saint-Denis and Courbevoie should be sent if needed.

There were then in Paris, on the morning of that terrible day, nearly eighteen thousand men of the line and light infantry; four thousand four hundred cavalry; two thousand of the garde municipale infantry and cavalry. Nearly eighty thousand men in all. We had been told of this increase of troops—for we had friends even in the War Office—an increase due indisputably to the circumstances under which they found themselves; they had added that the Government only waited an excuse for showing its strength; this meant that, instead of fearing a riot, they desired one. But there was so much ardour in the young political head which constituted the Republican party, that directly the match touched the flint, the spark flashed forth which was to fire the powder-magazine, the very powder-magazine which was to blow us all up. We were congregated on the place Louis XV. with all the heads of the secret societies. Only one of these societies, the Société Gauloise, was in favour of fighting. The previous day, the *Société des Amis du peuple* had met in the boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle and had decided, as we had done on our part, that firing was not to be begun, but that it should be answered if it were begun by the soldiers. As will be seen it needed only a single shot to lead to a general slaughter.

In addition to this state of things, the heat was stifling, the atmosphere charged with electricity, and huge black clouds rolled over Paris, as though the sky were in mourning and wanted to take part in the funeral ceremony, by the rolling of its thunder. It is quite impossible to-day, at this distance of time, twenty-two years later, to give any idea of the degree of excitement to which the crowd had reached, when it received from its leaders the order to take the place assigned to each corps, corporation, society and nation, in the funeral procession. It was

not a cortège; it was a federation round a funeral bier. At half-past eleven, under a driving rain, the state-carriage moved forward drawn by thirty young men. The corners of the pall were held by General La Fayette—who had a working man by his side wearing the July decoration, on whose arm the general leant from time to time when the paving became too slippery—by MM. Laffitte, Isay and Châtelain, of the *Courrier français*; by the Maréchal Clausel and by General Pelet; and, lastly, by M. Mauguin and a student from the École Polytechnique. Behind the bier walked M. de Laborde, questor to the Chamber, preceded by two ushers, accompanied by MM. Cabet and Laboissière, stewards of the cortège, and followed by a number of deputies and generals. The principal deputies were—

MM. le maréchal Gérard, Tardieu, Chevandier, Vatout, de Corcelles, Allier, Taillandier, de Las Cases fils, Nicod, Odilon Barrot, la Fayette (Georges), de Béranger, Larabit, de Cormenin, de Bryas, Degouve-Denuncques, Charles Comte, le général Subervie, le colonel Lamy, le Comte Lariboissière, Charles Dupin, Viennet, Sapey, Lherbette, Paturel, Bavoux, Baude, Marmier, Jouffroy, Duchaffaut, Pourrat, Pèdre-Lacaze, Bérard, François Arago, de Girardin, Gauthier d'Hauteserve, le général Tiburce Sébastiani, Garnier-Pagès, Leyraud, Cordier, Vigier.

The principal generals were—

MM. Mathieu Dumas, Emmanuel Rey, Lawoestine, Hulot, Berkem, Saldanha, Reminski, Seraski.

Of these three latter, the one was a Portuguese and the two others were Poles. With them were the maréchals de Camp Rewbell, Schmitz, Mayot and Sourd.

After the deputies and generals came the exiles of all countries, each group carrying its own national banner. Two battalions formed the escorting troop and marched in echelon on each side. Then—just as, in the midst of its quays, the flowing river overflows its banks after a storm—rolled by nearly six hundred artillerymen

with loaded rifles and cartridges in their cartridge-boxes and pockets; then ten thousand of the National Guard without guns, but armed with sabres; then groups of working men intermingled with members of secret societies; then thirty, perhaps forty or fifty thousand citizens! All these moved past in the rain. The cortège turned at the Madeleine along the boulevard, crowded on both sides with women and men, forming a variegated carpet, which the citizens at their doors or windows, men, women and children, took part in as though on a tapestry pattern. Not one of the ordinary sounds men make at great gatherings issued from that crowd. Only, from time to time a signal was given and, with incredible cohesion, the cry was uttered by a hundred thousand voices whilst flags, banners, pennons, branches of laurel and of oak were waved—

"*Honneur au général Lamarque! . . .*"

Then all lips were silent; and the branches of oak and laurel, pennons, banners and flags expressed no more motion than as before a brief and hot squall during a tempest. All was as silent and nearly as still as death. But in the air there floated an invisible something, whispering low: "Misfortune!" All eyes were fastened on us, the artillerymen. They knew well that if anything burst forth it would be from among the ranks of the men in that severe uniform who marched side by side, with gloomy looks and clenched teeth, who, like impatient horses shaking their plumes, shook the red streamers on their shakos. I could the better judge of these arrangements, as, under instruction from the family, I did not walk in the ranks, but by the side of the artillery. From time to time, men of the people whom I did not know broke through the hedge, and shook me by the left hand—I held my sabre in my right—and said to me—

"The artillery need not be anxious, we are here!"

It took nearly three-quarters of an hour to get to the rue de la Paix. There, a movement was, all at once, set on foot which no one at first understood. It was not in the programme. The head of the cortège was drawn in the midst of unintelligible shoutings in the direction of the place Vendôme. I ran to make inquiries : thanks to my uniform and to a certain popularity which it had already acquired, and especially to the gold-fringed tri-coloured scarf which I wore on my left arm, everybody made way for me. I therefore gained with more ease than I should have expected the head of the column, which was already moving into the rue de la Paix. And this is what had happened.

At the top of the rue de la Paix, a man dressed as an operative, but who it was easy to recognise belonged to a higher class, had broken away from the boulevards and was exchanging a few words with the young people attached to the hearse. Soon, a cry went up—

" Yes, yes, the soldier of Napoleon, round the column ! . . . To the column ! To the column ! "

And, without consulting either generals or deputies or police, whether in uniform or without, a unanimous impulse made the catafalque deviate from the straight line and it was hurried into the rue de la Paix. This was episode the first of that day's journey. I ran and resumed my place.

" What is the matter ? " they asked me.

" The hearse is going to be taken round the column."

" Will the post present arms ? " a voice asked.

" *Pardieu !* " said another voice, " if they do not present arms of their own accord they shall be made to do so by force."

" Honour to General Lamarque ! " shouted a hundred thousand voices.

Then, as before, all returned to silence : the head of the cortège reached the place Vendôme. Suddenly, a great shudder went through the crowd : that serpent with its

thousand coils trembled at the least shock from head to the tail. At the sight of the cortège coming out on the place Vendôme, the picket of the staff officers remained shut inside the guardhouse. The sentinel alone paced up and down before the door. A shout sounded—

"Honour to General Lamarque! Honour to General Lamarque!"

At the same time, a fiery crowd rushed upon the staff officer's guardhouse. The commandant did not even attempt to offer resistance; after a moment of parleying, he ordered his soldiers out, took the field and presented arms. This first episode prepared for the struggle by showing that the most lukewarm spirits were ready for an outburst. This successful issue was looked upon as a victory. It is, moreover, probable that the head of the guardhouse had had no orders of any kind.

The procession round the column had no connection whatever with the programme; the officer yielded, not from fear, but from the sympathy which, no doubt, his soldierly heart felt towards the remains of the great general and the famous member of the Tribune. He did wisely, for a terrible collision would else have taken place; and as it was so close to the Tuileries, who knows what would have happened? The cortège regained the rue de la Paix, and resumed its sombre and silent march along the boulevards. It reached the club in the rue de Choiseul, now the *Cercle des Arts*; the balcony was filled with members of the club. Only one had his hat on his head; he was Duke Fitz-James. I guessed what would happen and I confess I trembled. I knew Duke Fitz-James very well indeed, and he, on his side, returned my friendship heartily. I knew that, if forced, he would rather be torn to pieces than take off his hat. I was, therefore, most anxious that he should raise it of his own accord. Just at that moment, whether by chance or by preconcerted provocation, the insistent phrase, "Honneur au général Lamarque!" was echoed, followed by the cry, "Take off

your hat! Off with your hats!" At the same time, a hailstorm of stones broke the windows of the house. The duke was obliged to withdraw. Three days later, I asked him for an explanation of this show of bravado, as it was very much out of harmony with his courteous manners.

"I cannot answer you as to this," said the duke; "the explanation of the riddle will reach you from la Vendée."

Indeed, a letter from the noble duke was found among the papers of Madame la duchesse de Berry, giving the explanation of the keeping on of the hat: it was a signal to which no one responded, or, rather, to which only those replied who could not understand it. This incident stopped the procession for nearly ten minutes; the National Guards appeared upon the terrace and asserted that what had been taken for an insult from the ex-peer of France was only an aberration; and the catafalque resumed its route through the crowd, as a heavy-laden vessel, which has the wind against it, painfully cleaves through the waves of the sea. From that moment all doubt ceased in my mind, and I was convinced that the journey would not be done without resort to firearms. The six hundred artillerymen with their pale faces and frowning brows were also convinced of it. However, no other incident occurred during the course from the Choiseul Club to the Saint-Martin Gate. After passing the Gymnase, the rain had stopped falling; but thunder rumbled incessantly, intermingling with the rolling of the drums. The presence of the police placed at intervals along the sides of the procession put the finishing touch to the irritation in people's minds. Their aggressive air caused the feeling that they were there to get up a quarrel; or, much more likely, instead of being inclined to alienate quarrels, to stir them up with all their might. Opposite the theatre, a woman observed to a man of the people who carried a flag, that the Gaulois-cock was a bad emblem of democracy. The bearer of the standard, in all probability sharing this opinion, reversed the flag, broke the Gaulois-cock under

foot and put in its place a branch of willow, the tree of mourning and friend of the tomb. A policeman saw this substitution and the conditions under which it was made; he sprang forward and snatched the standard from the hands of the man who carried it; the latter resisted, and the policeman drew his sword and struck him in the throat. At the sight of blood, a cry of rage went forth from every mouth; twenty swords, sabres and daggers came out of their scabbards. The policeman recognising that I was a steward, sprang to my side, crying, "Save me!" I pushed him in among the ranks of the artillerymen; some were of a mind to protect him, others to tear him to pieces; for five minutes he stood as pale as a corpse between life and death. The more generous feeling carried the day, and he was saved. At the same moment, all looks were attracted towards the same direction. An insult was offered by another policeman to a veteran captain, who drew his sword and attacked him. The policeman, on his side, drew his sword from its sheath and defended himself furiously. When he attained the pavement he buried himself out of sight in the density of the crowd, where his flight could be noted by the imprecations which rose as he passed through. The young man wounded by the first policeman had been able to continue on his way, leaning on the arms of two friends. Only, he had taken off his collar, and the blood from his gaping wound flowed on to his shirt and down his coat. His July decoration (I remember that it was a July ribbon) had become as red as the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. From this moment the conviction went through all minds that a bloody affray was approaching. Everything, in fact, seemed to suggest the use of arms; the rolling of drums, the noise of the tam-tams, the fluttering of the flags of all countries, the constant struggle between liberty and slavery, the cries of "Honneur au général Lamarque!" becoming more and more frequent and every time assuming a more

distinctly threatening character, the earth beneath and the skies above, and all that rent the air, combined to incite people's minds to a pitch of excitement filled with danger.

"Where are they leading us?" a terrified voice cried from the midst of a group of students.

"TO THE REPUBLIC!" replied a strong, sonorous voice, "*and we invite you to supper with us to-night in the Tuileries!*"

A kind of groan of joy greeted this invitation, which, in a different sense, recalled that of Leonidas to those of Thermopylæ, and I saw men who had no arms tear up the stakes which were used as props for the young trees that had just been planted on the boulevard in place of the old ones knocked down on 28 July 1830. Others broke the trees themselves to make into clubs.

The 12th Light were, as I have said, drawn up in line on the place de la Bastille. For an instant, it was thought the conflict would begin there; but, all at once, an officer came out from the front line, and advancing towards Étienne Arago, with whom he talked for a moment, he said to him—

"I am a Republican, I have pistols in my pockets; you can rely upon us."

Several artillerymen, who, like myself, had heard these words, shouted: "*Vive la ligne!*" The cry uttered by us was taken up with enthusiasm: they knew we should not give such a cry without reason. The line replied by a shout nearly as unanimous of: "*Honneur au général Lamarque!*" These words, "The line is on our side," repeated from rank to rank, ran through the whole length of the cortège like lightning. At the same time, loud shouts were heard of "*L'École Polytechnique! . . . vive l'École! vive la République!*" These were inspired by the sight of some sixty students running with disordered raiment, bareheaded, some with swords in their hands. They had been consigned to their quarters and had broken

out, overturning General Tholosé, who had tried to oppose their coming out; they had come to throw their popular name and their uniform, still blackened with the powder of July, into the insurrection. The artillery received them with open arms; they knew that, few though they were in number, they were a powerful support. Their arrival produced so much effect that, at sight of them, the band which preceded the hearse spontaneously played the *Marseillaise*. No idea can be formed of the enthusiasm with which the crowd greeted that electrifying air, forbidden for over a year. Fifty thousand voices repeated in chorus, "*Citizens, to arms!*" To this chant, the cortège crossed the place de la Bastille and traversed the boulevard Bourdon, advancing between the Saint-Martin canal and the public granaries. A platform was put up at the entrance to the bridge of Austerlitz; from it the farewell orations were to be given. After these were pronounced, the body of General Lamarque continued its route towards the département des Landes, where it was to be interred, whilst the procession returned to Paris.

It was after three o'clock in the afternoon; I had had nothing since the previous night, except the cup of chocolate from my friend Hiraux: I was literally dropping from exhaustion. The speeches bade fair to be long, and, naturally, tedious; so I proposed to two or three of the artillerymen to come and dine at the *Gros Marronniers*, and they accepted.

"Will anything happen?" I asked Bastide before I went off.

"I think not," he said, looking round him, "and yet, do not be deceived, the 29 July is in the air."

"In any case, I shall not go far away," I said, and I went.

"Are you going away?" Étienne Arago said to me.

"I will return in a quarter of an hour."

"Make haste, if you wish to take part!"

"How can I, I have neither rifle nor cartridges?"

"You must do as I have done, put pistols in your pockets."

He showed me the butt-end of a pistol sticking out of his pocket.

"*Diable!*" I exclaimed, "if I thought anything would happen I would dispense with dinner!"

"Oh! don't be anxious, if there is anything it will last long enough for you to come back before dessert."

That was probable, so we went off without scruples. I was so weak that I was obliged to lean on the arm of my two companions, and I very nearly fainted before entering the restaurant. They made me drink iced water and I revived. Everything was topsy-turvy, and we had great difficulty in getting waited on. We were engrossed in a huge fish-pie, the main dish always served in a dinner *à la Râpée*, when we heard a volley of firing, but so peculiar in sound that we never doubted but that it was the discharge over the hearse in honour of the illustrious dead.

"To the memory of General Lamarque!" I said, raising my glass.

My two companions pledged me. Then we heard four or five single shots.

"Oh! oh!" I exclaimed, "that is another tale altogether! Those shots sound like sport."

I ran on to the quay, where I climbed up on a railing. Nothing could be made out except that there was a great commotion about the pont d'Austerlitz.

"Pay quick and come and see what that music is," I said to my two companions.

We flung 10 francs on the table; but, as the firing increased, we did not ask for our change, we started running towards the barrier. The sound of firing had given me back my strength. When we reached the barrier, we found it guarded by men in blouses who, on perceiving us, shouted, "*Vivent les artilleurs!*" We ran up to them.

"What has been happening?" we asked.

"Only that they are firing on the people, and the artillery has returned the fire; père Louis-Philippe is at his last gasp and the Republic is proclaimed. *Vive la Republique!*"

We looked at one another. The triumph seemed to us too complete for the short time it had taken to happen in. But this is what had actually happened, and the stage things had reached. I said that, as we left, they were about to begin the orations. Banners of every nation had been taken up on to the platform—Polish, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese waved their standards of every colour above the catafalque, and amongst them was the flag of the German Union seen floating for the first time, black and red and gold.

General La Fayette had begun by saying a few lofty, calm and serene words, in keeping with the grand old man who uttered them; then came Mauguin, less restrained; Clausel, more military; then the Portuguese General Saldanha. Whilst the orators were speaking, the young men went from group to group disseminating news, such as: "They are fighting at the Hôtel de Ville!" or, "A general has just declared himself against Louis-Philippe!" Others, "The troops have revolted!" or, "They are marching upon the Tuileries!" No one believed such rumours seriously, and yet they warmed and stirred people's spirits and hearts. After our battery had passed through the boulevard, it took up its position near the platform. There were gathered Étienne Arago, Guinard, Savary, corresponding by means of signs with Bastide and Thomas, who were on the boulevard Bourdon. In the middle of General Saldanha's speech, attention seemed suddenly distracted; cries, commotion and rumours drew all eyes towards the boulevards. A man clad in black, tall, thin and as pale as a ghost, with dark moustaches, holding in his hand a red flag edged with black fringe, and mounted upon a horse which he had

difficulty in steering through the crowd, waved his blood-coloured flag, on which was written in black letters—

"LIBERTY OR DEATH!"

Where did the man come from? Neither at the trial or sentence was this told. All that was known was that his name was Jean-Baptiste Peyron, and that he came from the Basses-Alpes. He was condemned to ONE MONTH'S imprisonment. We none of us knew him. Was he excited, as he said himself, by a feeling of enthusiasm bordering on madness? Was he a seditious agent? The mystery has never been elucidated. But, wherever he came from and whatever the motive by which he was animated, his appearance was greeted with unanimous disapproval. General Exelmans shouted in a voice which dominated every other—

"Not the red flag! the flag of terror; we only want the tricolour, which is that of glory and liberty."

Two men then sprang on General Exelmans, and tried to drag him towards the canal. It was never known who they were. He shook them off and came across to the Comte de Flahaut.

"What is to be done?" General Exelmans asked.

"Run to the Tuileries and warn the king of what is going on."

They both rushed off to the Tuileries. At that moment, two young men unharnessed General La Fayette's carriage and led it towards the Hôtel de Ville. Simultaneously, and as though the impulse had been associated with the appearance of the man with the red flag, a column of dragoons came out of the Célestins barracks. M. Gisquet had sent the order, which ought to have been given by General Pajol, Commander of the First Military Division. The appearance of the dragoons, which at first, however, meant nothing hostile, as their pistols were in their holsters and their rifles hung at their saddlebows, yet produced a certain amount of commotion along the

boulevard Bourdon. Étienne Arago saw the effect and leant over towards Guinard's ear.

"I think it is time to begin," he said.

"Begin!" Guinard answered, laconically.

Arago did not wait to hear it twice; he rushed on to the platform. A student had followed after General Saldanha; Arago took his place and shouted—

"We have had enough of that kind of speech! Few words are needed and they are *Vive la République!* It was to that cry General Lamarque began his military career, it is to that cry we should follow his remains. *Vive la République!* Follow me, those who agree with me!"

Not one word of the allocution was lost; scarcely was it seen that a lieutenant of the artillery was going to speak before everybody kept silence. Besides, the name of Arago, which was very popular, had circulated in a whisper below the tremendous shout of "*Vive la République!*"

At the last words of his speech, Arago took possession of one of the flags from the platform, and, flag in hand, with Guinard and Savary by his side, he rushed to our battery. But, in the commotion which had followed the speech, the crowd had broken the ranks of the artillerymen in such a way that the three leaders, followed only by about thirty men, had disappeared from the sight of their other companions. At this moment, some shots were heard in the boulevard Bourdon.

Let us follow the fortunes of Arago, Guinard and Savary; we will return presently to the other portion of the struggle.

CHAPTER VI

The artillerymen—Carrel and *le National*—Barricades of the boulevard Bourdon and in the rue de Ménilmontant—The carriage of General La Fayette—A bad shot from my friends—Despair of Harel—The pistols in *Richard*—The women are against us—I distribute arms to the insurgents—Change of uniform—The meeting at Laffitte's—Progress of the insurrection—M. Thiers—Barricade Saint-Merry—Jeanne—Rossignol—Barricade of the passage du Saumon—Morning of 6 June

THE group of artillerymen who guided the three leaders we have just mentioned went down at double quick pace, shouting, "*Vive la République!*" along the right bank of the canal. Some fled before them, others rallied round; there was a frightful tumult. At the place de la Bastille they rejoined the 12th Light; after what the officer had said they were sure of these. So the soldiers let the artillery go by. The major saluted them and nodded his approval. At the boulevard Saint-Antoine, a cuirassier, whose name I have forgotten, joined the artillerymen. There was a cuirassier on 5 June as there was a fireman on 15 May. When the cuirassier reached the guardhouse of the boulevard, at the corner of the rue de Ménilmontant, he rushed into the guardroom, sword in hand; the people followed him. In an instant, the guardhouse was taken and the soldiers disarmed. They continued along the boulevard to shouts of "*Vive la République!*" cries which were almost everywhere received with cheers. At the top of the rue de Lancry, they met Carrel on horseback. He came, like a general, to find out the state of things for himself.

"Have you a regiment with you?" he asked.

"We have them all with us!" he was told.

"That is too much; I only want one," he said, laughing, as he resumed at a gallop his way along the Bastille road. The artillerymen took the rue Bourbon-Villeneuve. At sight of them, the guard at the Bank ran for their rifles, but, to the great astonishment of the insurgents, they presented arms. They could not, however, go through the whole of Paris in this fashion; they were a few yards from the Vaudeville, where they deposited the flag; they rapidly ate a few bites of food and made for the *National*, in the rue du Croissant. The Republicans flocked there, and, in the midst of them, men who held intermediary opinions, like Hippolyte Royer-Collard, for example. Meanwhile Carrel arrived, and his opinion was awaited impatiently.

"I have not great faith in the barricade," he said; "we succeeded in 1830 by an accident. Those who are of different opinion from me may move the paving-stones. I shall not persuade them to do it, nor shall I disapprove; but, in saving *le National* and in preventing them from compromising it as a newspaper, I shall keep a body-guard round until to-morrow. Believe me, it takes more courage to say to my friends what I am saying than to attempt with them that in which they are going to engage."

As Carrel uttered these words, Thomas arrived from the boulevard Bourdon.

"There is nothing for us to do here," said Thomas; "let us go away!"

At the same instant, the enthusiasts came out from the *National* offices and went to consult together at Ambert's, in the rue Godot-de-Mauroy.

We will now relate what had happened in the boulevard Bourdon, from whence Thomas had come. As we said before, the dragoons had issued from the Célestins barracks and, after advancing rapidly, had stopped two hundred

yards from the bridge. The multitude confronted them in terror. At this moment, the carriage of General La Fayette came out of the crowd drawn by young men. Those who marched before it shouted, "Make room for La Fayette!" The dragoons opened their ranks to let the general and the youths and the carriage pass. Scarcely had the general gone by before several shots rang out. Who fired those shots? Impossible to state, we did not ourselves know. It is the eternal question which history puts over and over again, without truth ever being able to formulate a reply; it was the enigma of 10 August, of 5 June and of 24 February. Instantly, the dragoons were beaten down with stones; children slipped even underneath the horses' bodies and ripped up the animals under the men. The conduct of the dragoons and of their commandant, M. Dessolier, was admirable; they sustained everything without either charging or firing. The attack was to come from another side. A sub-officer was despatched at a gallop to tell the colonel, who remained in the Célestins. The sub-officer reported, and the colonel decided not only to extricate his men by making a diversion, but, better still, to catch the insurgents between two fires. He came at the head of a second detachment, which, with trumpeters at its head, issued forth from the place de l'Arsénal. But scarcely had it proceeded a hundred yards before a discharge of musketry burst forth and two dragoons fell. Then the dragoons broke into a gallop, and, to avenge themselves for the attempted fusillade, charged the crowd along the boulevard Bourdon. A second discharge went off and Commandant Cholet fell dead. Then resounded the cry, "To arms!" Bastide and Thomas were at the opposite end of the boulevard Bourdon. They had not begun the attack, but, on the contrary, were attacked. They resolved not to recede by a single yard. A barricade was put up in a few minutes. It was defended by three principal leaders, Bastide, Thomas and Séchan. A dozen of the students of the

École Polytechnique, a score of artillerymen and as many more of the populace rallied round them.

As though his tall figure did not run double the danger of the other, Thomas mounted on top of the barricade; Séchan took hold of him from behind, put his arms round him and made him come down. They kept their position unmoved. The firing came from the Arsenal, from the pavillon de Sully, and from the public granaries all at the same time. The colonel of dragoons had had his horse killed under him; the lieutenant was mortally wounded. A bullet had just hit Captain Briqueville. The order to retire was given to the dragoons who doubled back along the rues de la Cerisaie and Petit-Musc. The barricade was cleared; it was futile to continue the struggle on the outskirts of Paris; it was in the heart of it that fires must be lit. Thomas, Bastide and Séchan flew along the boulevard Contrescarpe and re-entered Paris, shouting: "To arms!" Thomas ran to confer with the *National*. Bastide, Séchan, Dussart, Pescheux d'Herbinville, erected a barricade across the entrance to the rue de Ménilmontant, where Bastide and Thomas lived, and had a shed full of wood for burning. Meanwhile, the students, the pupils of the École and the populace had taken possession of the hearse. Shouts of "To the Panthéon" were heard.

"Yes! yes! to the Panthéon," all voices repeated.

The hearse was drawn up before the Panthéon. The municipal cavalry barred the way. It was attacked and offered resistance, but was driven back towards the barrière d'Enfer. Two squadrons of carabiniers came to its aid, and, thanks to this reinforcement, it kept the mastery of the convoy. The insurgents dispersed down the faubourg Saint-Germain, shouting: "To arms!" Paris was on fire from the barrière d'Enfer to the rue de Ménilmontant. Meanwhile, the young men who had taken out La Fayette's horses and were drawing his carriage heard the firing and cries of "Aux armes!" and the fusilade which increased on all sides. They were tired of

remaining inactive. The person sitting on the back seat leant forward towards the person on the seat opposite.

"An idea!" he said.

"What is it?"

"Suppose we fling General La Fayette into the river and say that Louis-Philippe has drowned him? . . ."

The youths began to laugh—fortunately, it was merely a joke. That evening, at Laffitte's, the noble old man related the anecdote to me.

"Ah! ah!" he said, "after all it was not a bad idea, and I do not know whether I should have had the courage to oppose it, supposing they had tried to put it into execution."

To this state, then, had Paris reached when we appeared at the barrière de Bercy, and when the populace, on guard, informed us that Louis-Philippe was at his last gasp and that the Republic was proclaimed. We went along the boulevard Contrescarpe in hot haste. At the place de la Bastille we found the 12th Light, who let us pass. The boulevards were nearly deserted. When we got to the rue de Ménilmontant I saw a barricade; it was guarded by a single artilleryman. I went up to him and recognised Séchan, rifle on shoulder—the same rifle of which I have already spoken in connection with the famous night at the Louvre. I stopped; I knew nothing positively, so I asked him for news and begged him to explain why he was alone. The rest were famished with hunger and were eating a hasty meal in Bastide's wood-shed. They must run at the first sound of firing. I learnt from Séchan what had passed in the boulevard Bourdon and I went on my way. My two companions of the route rushed down the rue de Bondy; I followed the boulevard. It was intersected at the top of the street and the faubourg Saint-Martin by a detachment of the line; the men were drawn up in three rows. I was asking myself how I could go through that triple line alone, in my hostile uniform, when I discovered among the ranks

an old battery comrade. True, I nearly fought a duel with him at the time over a difference of opinion. He was dressed in a round jacket, a policeman's helmet and a pair of the buttoned knickerbockers called charivaris. He had a double-barrelled gun in his hand, and had joined the troops as an amateur. Having recognised him, I thought I might feel easy and continued to advance, making signs with my hand. He lowered his gun. I thought he had recognised me, and was joking or wanted to frighten me, so I still went forward. Suddenly, he disappeared in a cloud of fire and smoke and a bullet whistled in my ears. I saw things were serious. I was by the café de la Porte-Saint-Martin. I wanted to run into the theatre passage, but it was closed. I thrust the door of the theatre open with one kick. The fourth or fifth performance of *La Tour de Nesle* was put up on the bills. I ran to the property stores. I came across Harel on the stage. He tore his hair at seeing his successful run interrupted. As he perceived that I was turning away from him, he said, " Where are you going ? "

" To the property stores."

" What do you want there ? "

" Have you such a thing as a rifle ? "

" *Pardieu !* I have a hundred. You know very well we have just been playing . . . that is to say, unfortunately not I, but Crosmer . . . *Napoléon à Schönbrunn.*"

" All right, I want a rifle."

" What for ? "

" To return one of my friends a bullet he has just sent at me. Only, I hope to be more adroit than he was."

" Oh ! my friend ! " exclaimed Harel, " you are going to get the theatre burnt down ! " And he placed himself in front of the door leading to the property stores.

" Pardon, my friend," I said to him, " I will give up the rifles as they are yours ; but give me the pistols that I presented for the second representation of *Richard* : not

only are they valuable ones but, also, they were a present."

"Hide the pistols!" cried Harel to the man who had charge of the properties.

They hid them so well that I never saw them again. Furious, I went up to the second storey. Through the small windows of the theatre, forming a long square, I could see all that was happening on the boulevard. The soldiers were still at their post, and my friend—the man with the double-barrelled gun, policeman's helmet and charivari—was with them yet. I was mad that I had not even the smallest pea-shooter. Whilst I was looking through this aperture, so narrow that it permitted me to see without being seen, an act of great signification was taking place opposite the theatre. A dragoon rushed up at full speed, bringing an order. A child was hidden behind a tree on the boulevard with a stone in his hand. Just as the dragoon passed by, the child hurled the stone and it struck the soldier's helmet. The dragoon hesitated, but did not stop to pursue the child, and went his way at full gallop. But a woman—the child's mother, probably—came out stealthily behind him, seized him by the collar and gave him a good hiding. I lowered my head.

"The women are not with us this time," I said; "we are lost!"

At that moment, I heard Harel calling me in a pitiful voice. I went down. By the door which I had burst open in order to get into the theatre, a score of men had entered and were demanding arms. They, too, had bethought themselves of *Napoléon à Schönbrunn*. Harel already saw his theatre being pillaged from top to bottom, and called me to help him, relying on my name, already popular, and upon my uniform as an artilleryman. I went and faced the crowd, which stopped when it caught sight of me.

"Friends," I said to them, "you are honest men."

One of them recognised me.

"Stop," he said, "it is M. Dumas, the commissioner of the artillerymen."

"Precisely; so you see we can understand one another."

"Why, yes! since you are on our side."

"Then listen to me, I beg."

"We will."

"You do not want to ruin a man who is of your own opinions, an exile of 1815, a prefect of the Empire?"

"We? we only want arms."

"Very well, then, M. Harel, the manager, was prefect during the Hundred Days and was exiled by the Bourbons in 1815."

"Then *Vive M. Harel!* . . . Let him give us his rifles and put himself at our head."

"A manager of a theatre is not master of his opinions; he is dependent on the Government."

"If he will let us take his rifles we will not ask anything further from him."

"Be patient and we shall have them! But I will give them to you."

"Bravo!"

"How many of you are there?"

"About a score."

"Harel, have twenty rifles brought out, my friend." Then, turning towards the good fellows, I said—

"You must understand clearly that it is I, M. Alexandre Dumas, who lend you these guns; those who get killed I will not bother, but those who survive shall bring back their arms. Is that agreed to?"

"On our word of honour!"

"Here are twenty rifles."

"Thanks!"

"That is not all; you must write upon the doors: *No arms left!*"

"Who has got any chalk?"

"I will call the head carpenter. Darnault, a piece of chalk!"

"Here it is."

"Go and write!" I said to my men.

And one of them, rifle in hand, in sight of the detachment of the Line, went and wrote on the three doors of the theatre, "*No arms left*," and signed it.

Then the twenty men shook hands with me, and went away, shouting, "*Vive la République!*" and flourishing their rifles.

"Now," I said to Darnault, "barricade the door."

"Upon my word," said Harel, "the theatre is your own from this moment, my dear friend, and you can do what you please in it. You have saved it!"

"Let us go and see Georges, and tell her she and the theatre are saved."

We went upstairs; Georges was nearly dead with fright. On seeing me enter, dressed as an artilleryman, she cried aloud, "Are you going out in that costume?"

"Of course!"

"But you will be killed before you reach the faubourg Poissonnière."

"Well, that is quite possible . . . and if my friend G. de B. had not taken such bad aim it would already have happened."

"Harel, lend him some clothes."

"Ah! yes, why not, Tom?"

"Well, at any rate, send for some of your own; I will not let you go out in that wretched uniform."

"Well, we will see!"

Harel called Darnault.

"Darnault, have you any of your men here?"

"Yes, I think so," said Darnault; "there is Guérin."

"Send him to fetch some clothes from Dumas's."

"Give me a note," said Darnault to me.

"Lend me your pencil."

I wrote a few pencil lines on a scrap of paper, and he ran off. A quarter of an hour later, Guérin returned safely. For that matter, the road was perfectly cleared. I rapidly

dressed myself in my ordinary clothes, and put my uniform under the care of Darnault—not wishing to entrust it to Georges, who would certainly have had it burnt—and I reached M. Laffitte's house by the faubourg Saint-Martin, the passage de l'Industrie, the rue d'Enghien and the rue Bergère. I did not get there till seven in the evening. La Fayette came to it by the boulevard. It was here he related to me the anecdote about the river. We went into Laffitte's house together, which I had not entered since the month of July 1830. The news that from all sides of Paris had reached this centre, of opposition, almost of insurrection, was as follows:—

On the right bank, they were masters of the Arsenal, of la Galiote guardhouse, of that of the Château-d'Eau and of the Mairie of the 8th Arrondissement; the Republicans had control of the Marais, the firearms factory at Popin court had been carried by assault, and twelve hundred rifles were given up to them; they had got to the place des Victories, and were preparing to attack the Bank and the Hôtel des Postes. But the rue Saint-Martin and its neighbouring streets was where the insurrection was concentrated, and the whole of that quarter was busy transforming itself into an impregnable fortress. The troop, still very disturbed by the events of 1830, did not know with whom it ought to side; should it stand by the Government, or should it turn to the People?—1830 pointed to the latter course.

With regard to the National Guard, the appearance of the man with the red flag had flung it into a state of consternation. It saw nothing in the insurrection of 5 June and the shouts of "*Vive la République!*" but a return to the Terror; it rallied rather for defence than for attack, and it was said that a whole battalion, massed on the pont Notre-Dame, had opened way to let eight insurgents pass through. So the Government, aware that the troops would do nothing except in concert with the Garde Nationale, had concentrated the control of all

the military forces in the Capital in the hands of Maréchal Lobau. It was at this moment, when all this news was being bandied about, that we entered M. Laffitte's salon. The sight of General La Fayette produced an outcry, and people rose and went up to him.

"Well, general," they all called from all quarters, "what have you been doing?"

"Messieurs," he said, "brave young fellows came to my house and appealed to my patriotism."

"What did you say to them?"

"I replied, 'The more riddled with holes the flag is, the more glorious it is! Find a spot for me where a chair can be put and I will sit in it and get myself killed there.'"

The deputies gathered at Laffitte's looked at one another.

"Now, messieurs," said Laffitte to them, with that sweet smile which never left him, even in times of greatest danger, "what do you say to that?"

"What did Maréchal Clausel say?" asked a voice.

"I can tell you," replied Savary, who had just entered, and had heard the question; "I have just come from him."

"Ah!"

"I urged him to join us, and he replied, 'I will join you if you are sure of a regiment.' 'Eh, monsieur!' I said to him, 'if we had a regiment we should have no need of you!' Whereupon I left him."

"Messieurs," said Laffitte, "if we are going to throw ourselves into the insurrection, there is no time to lose; we must instantly proclaim the deposition of the king, and appoint a provisional government, so that Paris may wake up to-morrow to find a proclamation on all the walls."

"Will you sign it, general?" continued Laffitte, addressing himself to La Fayette.

"Yes," La Fayette replied simply.

"I will too," said Laffitte; "we must have a third."

The general and the banker looked round; nobody offered.

"Ah! if only Arago were here!" said Laffitte.

"You know that you can count upon him," I hazarded; "he will not deny you: I have just left his brother, who is in the very thick of the insurrection."

"We can risk our own heads," said Laffitte, "but not those of our friends."

"Was it not done in 1830 for the Comte de Choiseul?"

"Yes; but the situation is more serious than in 1830."

"It is the same," I ventured to say.

"Excuse me! in 1830 we had the Duc d'Orléans with us."

"Behind us!"

"Still, he was there, and the proof of it is that to-day he is king."

"If he is the king, General La Fayette will recollect that it was no fault of ours."

Yes, wisdom lay in the young heads! I saw nothing was going to be done in this direction, and that the night would be spent in discussion. I went out: this was the easier to manage as I was a personage of but little importance, and probably no one noticed my absence. It was my intention to go either to the *National*, or to Ambert; but, when I regained the boulevard, I learnt that they were fighting in the rue du Croissant. I had no arms. Furthermore, I could scarcely stand, for I was consumed with fever. I took a cab and drove home. I fainted as I was going upstairs, and they found me unconscious half-way up between the first and second landing. Whilst I was being discovered on my staircase, and being undressed and put to bed, the insurrection pursued its course.

Let us follow it behind the scenes at the barricade of the rue Saint-Merry. We had left Séchan guarding the barricade in the rue de Ménilmontant by himself. As

soon as his comrades had done their meal, they rejoined him. At nine o'clock in the evening they had not yet been disturbed. The more advanced positions of the troops did not exceed the rue de Cléry. There was a great perturbation at the headquarters, where a certain number of generals and ministers had collected. Maréchal Soult, by virtue of his age and experience, found himself the natural president of this gathering. But he was perhaps the most undecided amongst them all. He remembered 29 July 1830 and the anathemas attached to the name of the Duc de Raguse. One general proposed to give the troops the order to withdraw, to draw them up on the Champ de Mars and, from thence, to re-enter Paris sword in hand. This strange strategical idea might have been adopted, but the prefect of police, M. Gisquet, opposed it with all his might. The collision, it will be remembered, had started upon an order of his given to the dragoons, and, during the three days the struggle lasted, he was more earnest in the fight and bolder in making extreme proposals than the boldest of the generals. The discussion went on until they were obliged to act; the danger assumed formidable proportions: the insurgents had successively carried the positions at the Bastille, la Lingerier, Blancs-Manteaux and the marché Saint-Martin, and repulsed the Municipal Guard with great losses. At eight at night the news arrived at headquarters that a barricade had just been constructed by the little bridge of l'Hôtel-Dieu; that the Municipal Guard, forced to beat a retreat, had surrendered the quai aux Fleurs to them; that they had completely surrounded the préfecture of police. Next, they issued orders to recall the troops into the town; a battalion of the 12th Light left Saint-Denis at the same time as the 14th came up from Courbevoie. The battery of the École militaire had been summoned to the Carrousel. A battalion of the 3rd Light and a detachment of the 6th Legion cleared the boulevard de

la Madeleine; at the Saint-Martin gate, two squadrons of carabiniers were stationed opposite the theatre, and General Schramm had taken up his position with four companies at the top of the Ambigu. At six o'clock P.M. only, and after repeated charges, the dragoons succeeded in making themselves masters of the place des Victoires, and it was in the presence of M. de Lemet, and passing through a double hedge of the National Guard, that the runners set off. About a quarter past nine P.M., Étienne Arago commanded, in the uniform of an artillery lieutenant, a night patrol of a score of men, completely armed, amongst whom were Bernard (de Rennes) fils, Thomas and Ambert; it joined forces with Bastide, Dussart, Pescheux d'Herbinville and Séchan. The barricade behind which I had seen Séchan alone with his rifle then numbered nearly forty defenders. They spent the night making fortifications. M. Thiers had arrived about the same hour at the headquarters. He had seen the fire near by; by chance, he dined that day at the *Rocher de Cancale* with Mignet and Haubersaert; they had been surrounded for a moment by the insurgents, who were concentrated in the environs of the Cloître Saint-Merry, and had not the faintest idea that three of the hottest partisans for Louis-Philippe were near to them. M. Thiers had recounted so many battles in his *Histoire de la Révolution* that he was something of a general himself. Arrived at the place du Carrousel, he made his staff out of MM. Béranger, Kératry, Madier de Montjau and Voisin de Gartempe, who were there, and distributed cartridges whilst telling the deputies who were so inclined to come and join him where he was. Only nine answered to the invitation.[1] They knew the king was to come, and waited for him with great impatience. They would know what he would do by the expression of his face. The king arrived, calm, and even smiling. As we have said, with reference to the manner in which he

[1] Louis Blanc, *Histoire de Dix Ans.*

possessed himself of the throne, he was by no means audacious but he had great courage.

It was only then that the defence was organised. The insurrection was really situated at the heart of Paris. The rue Saint-Martin was occupied by two barricades, one to the north at the top of the rue Maubuée, the other to the south, powerfully fortified, almost impregnable, at the top of the rue Saint-Merry. In the space between these two barricades, a house had been selected by the insurgents for use both as fortress and general quarters and ambulance. It was Number 30. The position had been chosen by almost as clever a strategist as M. Thiers. It looked on the rue Aubry-le-Boucher, consequently if people came along by that street they fell under a four-fold fire; if they attacked in the rear, they had to deal with the men on the barricades. A man named Jeanne, wearing the July decoration, who had earned a twofold celebrity by his courage in the conflict and his steadfastness before the judges, commanded this dangerous post. Two or three old soldiers were making bullets with lead torn from the gutters; children went and tore down the advertisements from the walls and brought them to make wads. We will presently publish the narrative of one of the children in its simplicity.

Suddenly, some one came to tell the Republicans, half of whom were without arms, that in the courtyard of that very house, No. 30, an armourer's shop was to be found. This was marvellous news indeed. The shop was open, and, without disorder or confusion, all the rifles it contained were distributed, and all the powder was portioned out in equal measures. The distribution was just completed when several shots were heard and the cry "To arms!"

This is what had happened:—

A column of the National Guard, which was reconnoitring in the rue Saint-Martin, had come to give help to the barricade.

"*Qui vive?*" cried the sentinel.

"Friends!" the commander of the column hastened to reply.

"Are you Republicans?"

"Yes, and we have come to help you."

"*Vive la République!*" the defenders of the barricade shouted in chorus.

A friend of mine, called Rossignol, could not resist the pleasure of being the first to shake hands with his co-religionists; he leapt over the barricade, and went towards the National Guards shouting, "You are welcome!" But at the same instant a cry went forth from the ranks of the National Guard—

"Ah! brigands! We have got you at last."

"Fire, friends!" cried Rossignol, "they are Philippists." And a discharge was fired from inside the barricade, killing five men of the National Guard.

It was the counterpart of: "A moi d'Auvergne! c'est l'ennemi." Only, more luckily than the Chevalier d'Assas, Rossignol re-entered the barricade safe and sound through a hailstorm of bullets.[1]

After a terrible struggle, and after returning to the charge three times, the National Guard was repulsed, and old men who had left off making their bullet casts, children who had stopped making wads to take up arms, laid their guns down and resumed their task. A lad of twelve had been wounded in the head by the first discharge; Jeanne could not make him leave the barricade, either in his capacity as leader or as a friend.

The National Guard went away and left their dead and wounded; but, as soon as the field of battle was cleared, Jeanne and his men cleared the barricade and picked up the wounded, whom they carried to their ambulances. A medical student who was one of the insurgents dressed their wounds, aided by two women. About a hundred yards from the barricade of the rue Saint-Merry,

[1] Noël Parfait, *Episodes des 5 and 6 June 1832.*

one was erected in the passage du Saumon, which had its sentinels spread out all along the rue Montmartre. At eight at night, Maréchal Lobau gave orders to take it, no matter at what cost; he meant by daybreak the next day to clear the rue Montmartre. They fought all night long. Those who guarded the barricade made this oath over the bodies of the comrades who had fallen—

"We will either go out conquerors or be carried away dead!"

The ground floor or *entresol* of a café which no longer exists was used as an ambulance, whilst, from the windows of the first and second storeys, from time to time, there rained into an extended sheet cartridges thrown by unknown hands. There were only twenty defenders of the barricade. When, after a fight lasting nine hours, the soldiers at last cleared the barricade, they found eight dead men lying on the pavement, seven wounded and disabled lying on beds on the ground floor of the café, and a pupil of the École Polytechnique dying on the billiard-table. The four other insurgents had succeeded in escaping.

On the morning of the 6th, the insurrection had receded and concentrated itself in two quarters: on the place de la Bastille and at the entrance to the faubourg Saint-Antoine and in the rues Saint-Martin, Saint-Merry, Aubry-le-Boucher, Planche-Mibray and Arcis. The Government united its whole efforts to carry these last positions. From the next day the place de la Concorde was crowded with Artillery; two battalions hurried from Saint-Cloud, and three regiments of cavalry entered Paris from Versailles, drawing their guns with them. As to the barricade in the rue de Ménilmontant, it held out until daybreak; but, as it was too exposed on all sides, it could not hold out longer; those who guarded it took refuge with Bastide and Thomas, and escaped by a little window that looked out on a small street.

At four o'clock in the morning it was rumoured that

everything had quietened down. After a feverish night I got up to find out the news; but, not being able to walk, I took a carriage. I drove to the rue des Pyramides. I hoped to see Arago there and learn the news from him. But neither he nor Bernard, fils (of Rennes) had returned; M. Bernard (of Rennes) and his charming daughters (whom I have not seen again, I believe, since that day) were very anxious; but whilst I was there a vigorous ringing of the bell announced with certainty some news either good or bad. They ran to the door and uttered a cry of joy. The father had his son back again, and the sisters beheld their brother again. I left the excellent family fondling their prodigal child, and went upstairs to Arago's rooms. He had taken off his artillery uniform.

"What barricade have you been behind all night?" he asked me, when he saw I was as pale as death.

"In my bed, unluckily. . . . And you?"

He related the story of the barricade in the rue de Ménilmontant.

"Is that all you know?" I asked.

"What more do you think I know? I left my rifle, . . . but come to the *National* with me, where we shall find news."

We went down, and, on the stairs, we met Charles Teste, who was going to Bernard (de Rennes).

"Ah! there you are, deserter," he said to Arago.

"How a deserter?" exclaimed the latter. "I have just come from fighting."

"It is just that that I mean; but there are various ways of deserting: you were the *maire*, and your place was not behind a barricade, but at your own offices; when one is the head, one must not make oneself a branch. . . . *Parbleu!* I too would have liked to take up my gun, it would not have been a very wicked thing to do, but I said to myself, 'Stay, Charles! You are the head, and you must not take the part of an arm too!'"

To those who knew Charles Teste, these words summed up the man himself in the one word—duty. We reached the *National*; it was very difficult to get into the offices, as they were very crowded. There we learned of the dispersion of the barricade au Saumon, but, at the same time, we also learned that the one in the rue Saint-Merry still held its ground. Latouche entered at this moment in great perturbation.

"It is all over!" he said.

"What, quite over?"

"Yes, quite."

"Have you come from it?"

"No, but I have just met some one who has."

"Good!" said Arago, "there is hope left yet. . . . Who will come with me?"

I yearned to go, but I could scarcely walk; a capital young fellow, a friend of ours, Howelt, wearing the July decoration, whom I still come across from time to time, came forward.

"Go to Laffitte's," Arago said to me, "and tell François, if he is there, that I have gone to find out the news."

I went to Laffitte's. The whole gathering was in a frightful state of confusion. They proposed to send a deputation to Louis-Philippe to protest against the revolt of the previous day. But let it be said that the proposition was rejected with horror and scorn. I recollect a saying of Bryas, which was superb in its indignation. His son, a pupil at the École Polytechnique, was among the insurgents. La Fayette also refused to take a step towards the king.

"Why this aversion," cried a voice; "*is not the Duc d'Orléans the best of Republicans?*"

"Ah! as the opportunity presents itself of denying the proposal erroneously attributed to me," exclaimed the noble old man, "I deny it."

Finally, they appointed three representatives, not to make apologies in the name of the insurrection, but to

implore the clemency of the king in favour of those who were still held. These three representatives were François Arago, Maréchal Clausel and Laffitte. Clausel declined, and Odilon Barrot was substituted. We other young men had not been able to get into the Committee Room, but I had met Savary in the courtyard—Savary, a member of the Institut, the great geometrician and physicist and astronomer and scientist of means, of whom death has since deprived his country before he had lived half an ordinary life!

We were very harmonious in opinions and, as our republic was not one shared by everybody, we at once seized upon one another to thresh out our ideas of a Utopia. So we had met and thus were occupied whilst waiting there together. Arago came out first, and we ran to him. Louis Blanc, who, in his capital *Histoire de Dix Ans*, has not let a single detail of that great period escape unnoticed, mentions our interview in these terms:—

"As M. Arago came out, he met Savary and Alexandre Dumas in the courtyard, a savant and a poet, both very excited; they had no sooner learnt what had passed at M. Laffitte's, than they broke into passionate and bitter speech, saying that Paris had only waited for one signal to rise in revolt, and that the deputies who were so ready to disclaim the efforts of the people were grossly culpable towards their country.

"'But is not everything at an end now?' asked François Arago.

"'No,' said a man of the people who was present, listening to our conversation, 'they are waiting for the tocsin from the Church of Saint-Merry, *for so long as a sick man's death rattle can be heard he is alive.*'

"I was struck with the expression and, as will be seen, I did not forget it."

CHAPTER VII

Inside the barricade Saint-Merry, according to a Parisian child's account—General Tiburce Sébastiani—Louis-Philippe during the insurrection—M. Guizot—MM. François Arago, Laffitte and Odilon Barrot at the Tuileries—The last argument of kings—Étienne Arago and Howelt—Denunciation against me—M. Binet's report

WHILST MM. Laffitte, François Arago and Odilon Barrot were on their way to see the king, let us see what was going on behind the Saint-Merry barricade.

One of those strokes of good luck which at times happens to us enables us to take the reader behind the scenes. A child of fourteen who was there, and who has since become a very distinguished man, sent me the following details three years after the cessation of the insurrection, written in his own hand, which I will reproduce in all its native simplicity. After a lapse of nineteen years I have discovered the paper creased and the ink turned yellow, but the story exact and faithful.

"THE BARRICADE SAINT-MERRY

"On the morning of 5 June 1832 my father sent me on an errand along the boulevard du Temple. It was the day of the funeral of the famous General Lamarque and there were large crowds in the place de la Bastille and along the boulevards. Like the true child of Paris that I am, eager to know everything, I stopped at each crowd: they were talking hotly about politics; several persons were so exasperated that they broke the little trees newly planted in place of those which had been sawed down in 1830, to make the barricades. We are well aware, they said, that they will not be of much use against rifles and

cannons, but they are first-rate against spies and policemen. There was nothing for it but for me to play truant. Instead, then, of returning home promptly, urged on by my insatiable curiosity I soon reached the Porte Saint-Martin; then I caught sight of General Lamarque's procession in the distance. The hearse came on slowly and stopped from time to time. I was surprised to see so few troops at a general's funeral-cortège; there were at the most only enough soldiers to keep some order during the march. At my age one judges the magnificence of a funeral procession by the number of troops which accompany it, and as a few weeks before I had seen at Casimir Périer's splendid cortège long and wide columns of soldiers marching on both sides of the carriage, I was at first astonished that they did not pay the same military honours to a general as to a banker.

"There were no soldiers; but an immense crowd flooded the boulevards, pushing and squeezing to get near the hearse. People were attached to it and drew the catafalque, shouting from time to time: 'Honour to General Lamarque!' That cry went all through me each time I heard it. They were quarrelling to get hands on the ropes: every one wanted the honour of drawing the precious burden; it was then, for the first time, that I heard men call each other by the name of *citizens*. Every face was stamped with an indefinable electrical enthusiasm, which was communicated through the whole of the crowd; a strong emotional feeling which was neither of grief nor of reflection lit up every face. I was only fourteen then, and I felt the enthusiasm to the bottom of my heart, and an emotion which no language could possibly express.

"'Bah!' I said, 'my father will scold me, but never mind that! I must pull that rope; some day, if I have any children, I will tell them, "I too helped to draw General Lamarque's hearse!" Just as my grandfather is always telling us, "I too belonged to the federation!"'

"Hardly had I hold of the rope—and that was not in a hurry, I can tell you,—when they stood in file! and I realised that the number of soldiers more or less had nothing to do with the matter, but that it was worth more to be a general of one's country than a minister of Louis-Philippe. At the end of a hundred yards I had to give

up my place to others: they would have killed me, I believe, to take the rope from me, so I let go and planted myself in front of one of the hedges which the people formed all along the boulevard; but I was violently pushed by the surging of the crowd against a dragoon's horse, and I had one of my big toes nearly broken. It was horribly painful, but, upon my word, it seemed as though enthusiasm could give me courage to bear the pain, if not actually make me forget it, for, hopping along, I followed the cortège as far as the place d'Austerlitz. The vast crowds which were gathering there became more and more menacing. A man with a long beard was haranguing the citizens; he held a red flag, and wore a Phrygian cap. They were discussing preparations for a fight. I listened to it all without understanding much of what it meant. Suddenly, a squadron of cavalry rushed full tilt at the people in a terrible charge: several shots were fired at the same time. Although wounded in the foot, as I have said, I did not stay to be the last on the square. As I was running away, I recognised a friend of mine called Auguste.

"'Where are you going?' I asked him.

"'With the Republicans, of course!' he replied.

"'What to do?'

"'To attack all the guardhouses at the barriers. Are you coming?'

"'Rather! Yes.' And I went. A few of the guardhouses made resistance, but nearly all surrendered without firing. I had no arms, to my disgust. Fortunately, during the attack on one of the positions, a young man, well dressed and with refined manners, fired a pistol; it was overloaded: the butt end went one way and the muzzle another, and the young man fell backwards. I leapt upon the muzzle, picked it up and put it in my pocket, intending to cock it on the sly.

"'Good! the Republicans have artillery,' said Auguste.

"Meanwhile the young man of the pistol picked himself up; he was hurt in the hand, and blood was flowing copiously.

"'Where is there a piece of rag?' he said; 'who has a bit of linen?'

"A boy in a blouse tore his shirt and gave strips of it to the injured man, who kissed him.

"'How funny it is!' I said to Auguste. 'I have never cried at a play and yet I am crying now.'

"In less than three hours, all the guardhouses were taken and disarmed on the place de la Bastille. At that moment, I thought seriously of going back to my father, but two artillerymen of the National Guard asked me if I would do them a kindness. I agreed, of course. They told me to go to the top of the faubourg Saint-Jacques to tell their mother, Madame Aumain, that her sons were all right; that they would probably return home a little later, but that, meantime, she must not be uneasy. I went with Auguste, looking upon it as a sacred duty to give a mother news of her children, and forgetting that my own mother might be just as uneasy as the mother to whom I was going. I should also add that, fearing my father's anger, I delayed as long as I could the moment for returning. We found Madame Aumain at the address given. The lady asked us eagerly how long it was since we had left her sons, and where we had left them; then she put a host of questions to us about the events of the day. She seemed to take the greatest interest in the success of the Republicans. A rather tall girl of exquisite beauty, probably the sister of the two artillerymen, was there, listening and questioning. Delighted with the importance bestowed on us by our errand, Auguste and I bragged like true children of Paris. When the ladies had learned all they wished to know—and they took over an hour in doing so—they urged us to return to our respective parents promptly. In spite of our fears of being severely scolded on our return, we decided to follow their advice, and left Madame Aumain, resolved not to stay on our way. Unfortunately, the traffic was stopped. When we reached the bridges, no use! it was impossible to go over. Then we retreated under a doorway with other individuals, similarly stopped short. But the concierge turned us out at eleven o'clock. Not being able to cross the river, and afraid of being taken up by the patrols, we returned to Madame Aumain, who received us as a mother would her own children, and we improvised a bed in the dining-room. Next day, at four in the

morning, Madame Aumain woke us, and told us to go quickly home, so as not to leave our mothers in anxiety any longer. It was easy to say, "Go home!" but to return from the faubourg Saint-Jacques to the faubourg Saint-Antoine, you must pass the Hôtel de Ville. More than two thousand men were stationed on the place de Grève; there was no way of passing through, and we stopped for two or three hours to watch the soldiers going and coming. Every moment big detachments were arriving, and succeeding one another all along the quays. About seven, an officer ran up scared, and shouted 'To arms!' Then, all inquisitive people rushed towards the rue des Arcis. We ran in common with everyone else to see what was going on in that district. A strong barricade was supported on one side against the corner of the rue Aubry-le-Boucher, and, on the other, against No. 30 rue Saint-Martin. They could see well enough that Auguste and I were not enemies, so the Republicans allowed us to pass the barricade. At some distance from the first, there was a second at the top of the rue Maubuée. In the intervening space were sixty armed men. Old men and children were making cartridges. Women were dealing out lint. Over each barricade a red flag floated. One citizen held it up in his left hand, whilst brandishing a sword in his right. One of two men shouted out to the soldiers—

"'Come on, you sluggards! We are waiting for you.'

"A detachment of soldiers appeared in the rue des Arcis at that moment. A young girl, whose lover was among the insurgents, and who stood watching from a window, saw them before anybody else did, and cried, 'To arms.' At the cry of 'To arms!' uttered by the girl, the Republicans took their places, and prepared to repulse the soldiers. The standard-bearers remained motionless on their barricades, ready to sustain the fire. It did not keep them waiting long, and a standard-bearer fell dead. The place was not long vacant; another sprang on the barricade, re-erected the flag and, ten minutes later, also fell. But it seemed they had agreed to see to it that the red flag should still stand, for a third Republican took the place of the second, and again the flag floated. The third was killed like the two others.

A fourth took his place and fell near the three others. Then a fifth. The sixth was a working man, a house painter; he seemed to be protected by a charm; for more than an hour he waved the flag, shouting, '*Vive la République!*' At last, at the end of an hour, he slowly got down and leant near the door of the house numbered 30, against which Auguste and I were standing. Then he fell heavily, heaving a sigh: he had said nothing, but he had been hit close to the heart. His brother, who saw him fall, dropped his gun for an instant to come and look after him; but, seeing he was nearly dead, and, sure that his efforts would be useless, he kissed him repeatedly, took up his rifle again, climbed up on the barricade, and slowly took aim, each time that he fired shouting, '*Vive la République!*' Each time, the sixty men who defended the barricade repeated the same cry, and the cry of sixty men, surrounded by 20,000 soldiers, made the throne of Louis-Philippe totter. Finally, both the soldiers and the National Guard at the outskirts of the city were forced to beat a retreat, after three hours' struggle. Meanwhile, Auguste and I, who had not been able to fight, climbed on to the railings of the shop of a wine merchant, and shouted with all the strength of our lungs—'*À bas Louis-Philippe!*' The truce was not for long: in an hour's time, soldiers and National Guards returned to the charge. Then the fight began again. Meanwhile Auguste and I returned to our doorway, and at times we made lint while at others we cast bullets. I often put my head out of the alley to see what was going on when the firing was hottest: then Auguste dragged me back with all his might.

"'Come, look here, do you want to get killed?' he cried.

"Then he would look out in his turn, and it became my turn to grab hold of him. Once, when I had pulled him back more roughly than was permissible, he was angry, and, whilst the people outside were fighting with guns, we fought with our fists. We were both in the right: death was speedy, and the whistling of the bullets so continuous that it sounded like the noise of the wind through a badly-fitting door. No one had yet eaten anything from morning until three in the afternoon.

At three, a distribution of brown bread was announced from the house opposite that where we were hiding. Then we ran across the street to fetch our rations in the thick of the bullets. We were just about to bite into our loaves as quickly as possible, when suddenly we heard the cry, 'We are lost!' Then we saw that, whilst the defenders of the barricade still kept possession of it, a dozen people, as curious as ourselves, rushed into the house to seek hiding-places. Auguste and I, who were there already, took the lead, and, climbing the stairs four at a time, soon reached the attic. There was a way out of the attic through a narrow dormer-window, and a man sat astride the roof, holding a strong arm to those who wished to cross to the other side and who were not afraid of attempting that aerial route. Auguste and I did not hesitate for one moment; from roof to roof we gained a window, and found ourselves inside the garrets of another house. The inhabitants of the attic helped us to enter, to the great anguish of the landlord, who shouted on the staircase, 'Be off with you, you scamps! You will burn my house down!' But, as you may well imagine, nobody took any notice of the landlord; all installed themselves as best they could. Things were much worse when he saw two or three combatants, black with powder, arrive in their turn, rifles in hand.

"'At least fling away your weapons!' he cried, tearing his hair.

"'Throw our rifles away?' replied the fighters. 'Never!'

"'But what do you mean to do?'

"'To defend ourselves unto death.'

"And as they had no more bullets, but some powder left, they tore the rods from the curtains and slipped them up the muzzles of their guns.

"As for us, who had no arms, and whom the struggle had not transported to such a degree of heroic exaltation as this, we went down to the cellars, which were full of packing cases and vegetables, and we hid ourselves as well as we could. A dozen people descended after us, and also hid themselves to the best of their ability. On the cellar stairs several Republicans planted themselves, standing ready to defend themselves to the last extremity. At that

moment we heard the roar of cannon, which shook the house to its base. The paving stones of the barricade flew into splinters, and rebounded on the pavement. Then only was it that I realised the extent of the danger we were running. My first idea was that the house was going to fall, and that we should be buried under its ruins. Then I sank on my knees and, weeping, said all the prayers I could remember. I asked my father and mother's forgiveness for having disobeyed them and for having left them in trouble; I fervently called upon God, and beat my breast with all my might. Auguste showed less despair, and waited death with more courage than I. From time to time we pressed one another tightly in our arms. During one of these embraces he noticed that I still had the barrel of the pistol in my pocket, and he made me throw it to a corner of the yard. Several voices shouted, 'Shoot him if he will not speak!' It was the concierge that was being threatened thus, because he refused to tell where we were hidden. Five minutes later, the door of the cellar was violently broken in, and three or four soldiers sprang on the stairs. Some shots exploded, which lit up the cellar strangely and filled it with smoke. Then, whilst other voices shouted 'Lights!' thirty to forty soldiers rushed into the cellar. From that moment I saw no more; I only heard cries of pain, a clashing of steel, and I felt a hand take me by the neck and shake me violently. Then the hand lifted me two feet from the ground and flung me against the wall. I fell in a faint on the bottom of the cellar steps. Yet from the depths of my unconsciousness, whilst unable to shake myself free from it, I felt those who went up and down the cellar steps pass over my body. At last I succeeded in rousing myself by a violent effort of will. I first got up on one knee with my head bent as though it were so heavy that I could not hold it; then, at last, by the assistance of the wall, I got on to my feet. At that moment an officer caught sight of me and sprang at me, kicking and cuffing me: 'What!' he exclaimed, 'are there even street urchins here?' At the same time a soldier gave me a blow with the butt end of his gun. This flung me against the wall, and instinctively I put up my hands, otherwise my skull would have been broken. Auguste, who followed me, was more lucky;

whilst they were mauling me he slipped rapidly up the stairs and escaped a portion of the ill-treatment that those met with who were found in the cellar. At last, with hard cuffs, they made me go up into the yard, and, like all the other prisoners, I was kept in sight under the carriage gateway of No. 5. Our guard was made up of a sergeant and two soldiers. I had been crying so long and been so badly handled that I could scarcely stand on my legs; so in a few minutes I felt I was going to faint again. I held out my arms and called for help. The sergeant sprang forward and caught me. Whilst I was fainting, I did not hear plainly what the good man was saying: I gathered, however, that he was sorry for me, and gave me into the soldier's care.

"That brought me back to my senses in a few minutes, and I opened my eyes again. Then I told him how I came to be there, and the circumstances which had brought Auguste and me to this. My story bore the stamp of such truthfulness that he was touched, and promised he would do us no harm. We remained over half an hour under this doorway, and during that time I was present at all the atrocities which could be committed during a civil war. The victorious soldiers, irritated by their losses, wanted to shed blood in compensation for shed blood. They fired on everybody, without troubling whether they were Republicans or inoffensive citizens; from time to time a dull thud was heard: we did not even seek to ascertain the causes of the noise. It was the wounded being pitched out of the windows, and, as they fell, they slid down the roofs and fell on the pavement. They brought a Republican, taken with arms in his hand, opposite the door and crushed him with blows from the butt end of their guns, spitting him with bayonet thrusts.

"'Wretches!' he cried, 'respect the conquered and prisoners, or give me some sort of weapon and let me defend myself.'

"They loosed him, knocked him over with their rifle butts and shot him point blank.

"Oh! monsieur, I swear that, when a child of fourteen sees such things, he prays to God all his life he may not see them again.

"In No. 30, on the third floor, some soldiers seized a wounded man by his legs and arms and threatened to throw him out of the window. His body was already half in space and about to be flung on the pavement, when other soldiers below, who were firing on the roofs and through the windows, were horrified at this action, and threatened to fire on their comrades. The man was not thrown down. But was he saved, for all that? I have no idea. Soon the sergeant with whom I had made friends received orders to take us to the guardhouse des Innocents. We went through the rue Aubry-le-Boucher and by the front of the markets. As it rained at the time, a great number of soldiers stood under the arcades; as we passed they reviled us, shouting to their comrades—

"'Knock the ruffians down! Kill them!'

"I never took my eyes off the good and kind sergeant, and, whilst a crowd of curious spectators watched us pass and the crowd made a sort of block, he made me a sign. I slipped between the two soldiers, Auguste following me. The crowd made way for us and closed in after us; the soldiers let fly a big oath as though they were furious, though really at heart they were delighted. Our sergeant seemed to have endowed each of his men with some of his own kindliness of heart.

"I ran home without stopping, and fell like a bomb into the midst of my family. My mother fainted; my father stood speechless. They had been told that I had been flung over the pont d'Austerlitz into the Seine. They thought I had died the day before. I was very ill. My father sent me to bed and I nearly had brain fever. I am told, Monsieur Dumas, that this story will interest you, and I send it you.

"Ah! You whose voice is powerful say clearly and say often—

"'*ANYTHING RATHER THAN CIVIL WAR!*'"

What the poor child said is only too true: there were terrible acts of vengeance done on that fatal 6 June, by both the troops and the National Guard. It is a happiness to mention here the name of General Tiburce Sébastiani, whose unending kindness has

made us forget (and even worse than forget), the welcome his eldest brother gave us on our arrival in Paris.

General Tiburce Sébastiani, better than any one, could raise the bloodstained veil which we throw over those atrocities; for he was a providence to the wounded whom they finished off slowly, and to the prisoners whom they meant to shoot. Not being able to stand, I had sat down in a chair in the Café de *Paris*, I think it was, and there I waited for news, when. all at once, cries resounded of "*Vive le roi!*" uttered by the National Guard, and the king appeared on horseback accompanied by the Minister of the Interior, for War and for Commerce. At the club in the rue de Choiseul, he stopped and held out his hand to a group of armed National Guards; even those who, sixteen years later, were to overthrow him, uttered cries of savage joy at the honour he was paying them. He then continued on his way. When I saw him pass, calm and smiling and unconcerned about the danger he was incurring, I felt a sort of moral vertigo, and I asked myself if the man who saluted to these many cheers was not verily a man elect, and if one had the right to strike a blow at a power with which God Himself, by declaring for him, seemed to side. And at each fresh attempt at assassination made against him, from which he escaped safe and sound, I put the same question to myself, and, each time, my conviction got the better of the doubt, and I said—"No, things cannot remain as they are!" The traces of this conviction will be discovered all through my works—in the Epilogue to *Gaule et France*, in my letter addressed from Reichenau to the Duc d'Orléans, in my visit to Arenenberg, in my articles on the death of the Duc d'Orléans.

This ride seemed to open the series of attempted assassinations of Louis-Philippe; for the attempt at M. Berthier de Sauvigny's cabriolet, on the place du Carrousel, cannot seriously be regarded as an attempt on the king. On the

quay not far from the place de Grève, a young woman lay with her wounded husband's rifle to her cheek; but the weapon was too heavy, and her hand too weak: the weight of the gun lowered her hand and the shot was not sent. The king returned about two o'clock. M. Guizot awaited him in his cabinet. The statesman and the king remained together for an hour. No one knows what was decided during that *tête-à-tête*; but we may be sure that M. Guizot, according to the character we know of him, would not be for conciliatory measures. As M. Guizot left by one door, an open carriage brought MM. François Arago, Laffitte and Odilon Barrot. I take the following details from the lips of our famous savant himself. He reminded me of them as he leant on my arm during the walk of 26 or 27 February 1848, to the Bastille. He was then a member of the Provisional Government which reigned for a brief space over the kingdom of Louis-Philippe.

An open carriage, as we said, containing MM. Arago, Laffitte and Odilon Barrot entered the Tuileries courtyard. Scarcely had it turned the corner of the gateway, when a stranger stopped the horses, and ran excitedly to the window. "Do not enter," he said.

"Why not?" asked Odilon Barrot.

"Guizot is leaving."

"Very well, what then?"

"Guizot is your personal enemy, and, perhaps, is giving the order to arrest you at this very moment, as in the case of Cabet and Armand Carrel."

The three commissioners thanked the unknown person; but, not believing there was any danger—or at least, not any imminent—they went on their way, got out of the carriage, and had themselves announced to the king. The king soon gave orders for them to go in. At the moment when he was just passing through the door, M. Laffitte turned round to his two colleagues, and whispered to them—

" Let us be on our guard, gentlemen! he is going to try to make us laugh."

It was a strange moment to choose for fearing such a means of controversy. But M. Laffitte boasted he knew the king better than any body else. It was an assumption allowable to the man who had given him his popularity, and sold the forest of Breteuil.

The king, in fact, received the three deputies with a tranquil face, almost smiling. He told them to be seated, which indicated that the audience would be long, or, at all events, would be as long as the gentlemen wished it to be. Louis Blanc, who was informed by all three actors in that scene, has related it in full detail. I will not add anything, therefore, to it, but put it in dialogue form, which makes it perhaps more vivid.

The situation was a grave one: insurrection at Lyons, insurrection at Grenoble, insurrection in la Vendée, riots or revolution everywhere. But there remained the question as to what were the causes of these bloody troubles and terrible collisions. According to the opinion of the three deputies, it was the reaction brought about by getting farther day by day from the programme of July. The king said it was the spirit of Jacobinism, not properly extinguished under the Convention, the Directory and the Empire, which strove to revive the Days of the Terror. He instanced the appearance of the man with the red flag, whom the Republicans sent back to the rue de Jerusalem, whence he made out he had come.

A conversation based on such lines between a barrister and a king threatened to be of long duration. A sinister sound which was to be heard in the streets of Paris more than once under the reign of Louis-Philippe now made itself heard, and cut the conversation in half, as a blow from a scythe cuts a snake in two.

" Sire, do I hear wrongly ? " asked Laffitte, trembling, " Is that cannon ? "

" Yes; . . . they have pushed on," said the king, " to take

the Monastery of Saint-Merry without too great loss of life."

"Sire," Laffitte continued, "you are less severe with respect to the Legitimists than towards the Republicans."

"In what way?"

"Your Majesty employs strange dealings towards them!"

"Listen, Monsieur Laffitte," said the king, "I always remember the saying of Kersaint: 'Charles I. was beheaded, and his son ascended the throne; James II. was only exiled, and his race died out on the continent.'"

"Sire," said Arago, "we had hoped, however, that, when Casimir Périer died, this system of reaction and of persecution would stop."

"So," replied the king, laughing, "they attribute this system to a minister?"

"No, but at least we hoped it was his work."

"You are mistaken, monsieur," said the king, frowning; "the system is mine; M. Casimir Périer was but an instrument in my hands, strong, and yet pliant like steel; my will has always been, is now and ever shall be immovable. Once only it gave way, as you very well know," added the king. "As M. de Salvandy has said, 'At my fête du Palais-Royal we marched over a volcano—the Revolution, which has spread its principles through every nation in Europe—but every nation has not an Orléans on the throne to suppress them.'"

It was a very differently specified programme than that of the Hôtel-de-Ville. Then M. Arago rose—

"Sire," he said, "after hearing the expression of such opinions as that, do not ever count on my co-operation."

"What do you mean by that, Monsieur Arago?"

"That never, under any capacity, will I serve a king who binds the hands of progress; for, in my opinion, progress is only another name for a well-conducted Revolution."

"Neither more nor less, sire," said Odilon Barrot.

But the king, touching him on the knee, said—

"Monsieur Barrot, recollect that I have not accepted your resignation."

In fact, on 24 February 1848, at seven in the morning, M. Barrot was appointed Minister. True, at noon, he was so no longer! the revolution, which the king boasted to have suppressed, carried him away as a hurricane carries off a dead leaf.

The three deputies got up. As nothing could be done, there was nothing to be said. They were accompanied on their return to the Hôtel Laffitte by the report of cannon. We have related, or, rather, a child of fourteen, an eye-witness, has related the end of the terrible scene. One of our friends, Étienne Arago, was among the Republicans while his brother was with the king. We saw him setting off with Howelt; the same night, thinking I was ill, he wrote to me as follows :—

"My dear Dumas,—All is over, for to-day, at any rate. The men at the Cloître Saint-Merry fell, but as they should, like heroes. In a word, this is what we saw with our own eyes: We left, as you know, with Howelt; we went along the boulevards, and down the rue du Petit-Carreau. Having gone through the zone of fire which swept the adjacent streets, we saw at the end of the rue Aubry-le-Boucher, where No. 30 rue Saint-Martin is visible, that approach was possible. We had just arrived between two attacks. We took advantage of it to proceed as far as the barricade; it had just been deserted. All was concentrated at No. 30; both attack and defence. We went to a herbalist's and, behind the bunches of herbs hung in his window, we saw the taking of No. 30. The artillery arrived. Can you not imagine my state? I trembled lest my brother Victor, a captain at Vincennes, were among the artillerymen. When I meet you, I will tell you what we saw. Finally! . . . We only left the street at half-past six. I returned to the Vaudeville, where I came across Savary; he had met you, he told me, at Laffitte's, and there you had both spoken with my brother François.

"I received word from Germain Sarrut to warn me that a warrant had been issued against me.—Yours,

"ÉTIENNE ARAGO"

I was not too easy on my own account. I had been seen and recognised in artillery dress by everybody on the boulevard; I had distributed arms at the Porte-Saint-Martin; finally, I knew that, in the December of the preceding year, a denunciatory epistle against me had been addressed to the king. It was a strange document! it was discovered in 1848 among Louis-Philippe's papers, and fell into the hands of one of the unknown friends of whom I often speak and for whose friendship I am grateful. That friend sent it to me. It is a report dated 2 December 1831, bearing the number 1034. I will transcribe it exactly, although I truly hold a secondary and episodic place in it. It will prove that what I say of my opinions, which are always the same, is not exaggerated. Besides, I think the moment is not very opportunely chosen to brag of being a Republican. It is an authentic report, and bears M. Binet's signature. I need hardly say that I had not the honour of that gentleman's acquaintance. (*See* Appendix.)

BOOK V

CHAPTER I

Le Fils de l'Émigré—I learn the news of my premature death—I am advised to take a voyage for prudence and health's sake—I choose Switzerland—Gosselin's literary opinion on that country—First effect of change of air—From Châlon to Lyons by a low train—The ascent of Cerdon—Arrival at Geneva

ON the morning of 7 June, Harel came to my house.

"Come," he said, "dear friend, you must lose no time. Peace is re-established; as is the case after all great upheavals, there is going to be a reaction in favour of the theatres. People must forget the cholera and the riotings; the cholera has died a natural death; the insurrection is killed; which proves that Louis-Philippe is stronger than Broussais. Where have you got to in *Le Fils de l'Émigré*?"

"My dear friend, three acts are done."

"Done . . . written out?"

"Done and written out! but I declare to you that, for the moment, I am unequal to set to it again. I am broken down with fatigue, consumed with fever and have lost all appetite!"

"Finish *Le Fils de l'Émigré*, and then go a journey. . . . You will make prodigious sums of money this summer; you can very well take a little rest!"

"Have you any money to give me?"

"How much do you want?"

"A thousand francs or so . . . two perhaps . . . and authority to draw upon you for as much."

"Give me my two last acts and I will give you the money and a draft."

"You know I think it execrable."

"What?"

"*Le Fils de l'Émigré.*"

"Bah! You told us the same about *La Tour de Nesle*. . . . Georges is delighted with the prologue, and Provost also."

"All right, when you go, ask Anicet to come and see me. . . . I will try to do my best."

Anicet came to me in a quarter of an hour's time. He is a conscientious worker and an indefatigable hunter-up of things; no one could do his part more generously in a collaboration. I have already said that he brought me the plan of *Teresa* almost entirely done. I gave him the idea of *Angèle*; and, at the same time, it was he who discovered not *Muller médecin* but *Muller malade de la poitrine*, namely, the profoundly melancholy side of the work. The idea of *Le Fils de l'Émigré* was his; the execution—specially in the three first acts—was entirely mine. We did the two last acts together during 7 and 8 June.

On 9 June I read in a Legitimist newspaper that I had been taken with arms upon me in the affair at the Cloître Saint-Merry, judged by court-martial during the night and shot at three in the morning. They deplored the premature death of a young author of such hopeful promise! The news wore such a stamp of truth; the details of my execution, that I had, by the way, borne with the greatest courage, were so circumstantial; the information was derived from such a good source that, for the moment, I had my doubts and felt myself all over. For the first time the newspaper said something nice of me; but then the editor believed I was dead. I sent him my card and wrote on it, "*Avec tous mes remercîments.*"

As my messenger went out, another came in, bringing a letter from Charles Nodier. It was couched in these terms :—

" My dear Alexandre,—I have at this moment read in a newspaper that you were shot on 6 June at three in the morning. Be so good as to tell me if it will prevent you from coming to dine to-morrow at the Arsenal, with Dauzats, Taylor, Bixio and in fact our usual friends.—Your very good friend, Charles Nodier
" who will be delighted at the opportunity to ask you for news of the other world."

I made answer to my beloved Charles that I had just read the same news in the same paper ; that I was not sure myself whether I was alive ; but that, body or shade, I would be with him next day at the hour named. However, as I had not eaten much for the last six weeks, I added that it would be more a question of my shadow than my body ; I was not dead, but distinctly very ill ! Moreover, I had been warned by an aide-de-camp of the king that the possibility of my arrest had been seriously discussed ; I was advised to go and spend a month or two abroad, then to return to Paris, and on my return no more would be said. My doctor gave me the same advice in hygiene as His Majesty's aide-de-camp gave me in politics. I had always had a great desire to visit Switzerland. It is a magnificent country, the backbone of Europe, the source of three great rivers which flow to the north, east and south of our continent. Further it is a republic, and, small as it was, I was not at all sorry to see a republic. Moreover I had a notion I should be able to turn my travels to account.

I went in search of Gosselin, to whom I offered to write a couple of volumes on Switzerland. Gosselin shook his head : according to him, Switzerland was a played-out country about which there was no more to write ; everybody had been there. It was in vain I told him that if everybody had been there everybody would go, and that,

supposing those who had been there would not read my book, I should at all events be read by those who were going; but I could not succeed in convincing him. I, therefore, decided to regard the two or three months I was to spend in Switzerland as time wasted. I sent Harel the last two acts of the *Fils de l'Émigré*; he gave me the 3000 francs promised, and I received a draft to draw upon him for another 2000 francs. At last, provided with a proper passport, I started on the night of 21 July.[1]

As will be well understood, I have no intentions of beginning over again here my *Impressions de Voyage:* I will only tell in my Memoirs what has not found a place in my first narrative, it will not be much for frankness is one of my qualities: it has made me many enemies, but I do not thank God any the less for having given me this virtue. The reader may, then, make himself easy: I am going to take him as rapidly as possible over the route on which, in my *Impressions de Voyage*, I was obliged to stop at every step.

The day after my departure from Paris, I arrived at Auxerre. The change of air began to produce its effect upon my health; at Auxerre, seated at the table where the diligence dinner was served, I regained a little appetite. An enormous dish of cray-fish drove away all my doubts! I ate, so I should not be long before I was better. I slept at Auxerre, wishful to give the good fairy we call Sleep time to complete his work. The ancients called Sleep the brother of Death; but, exact as they were in their definitions, in my opinion, they are ungrateful to Sleep: it is the restorer of strength; the source whence youth derives its energy, and health conceals its treasury. Ah, good gentle sleep of youth! how well one feels that thou art life! Lose love, lose fortune, even hope, if only sleep comes: for the time being, it will return to you all that you have lost. *For the moment*, I say, indeed; but it is exactly by means of the sorrow you take up again directly

[1] See Appendix.

you open your eyes that you understand how sweet and potent sleep is!

We stopped afresh at Châlon. A friend who was there suggested to me that, instead of the urban curiosities, the great cellars like catacombs, we should visit a freak of nature and a ruin made by time: the Reaux-Chignon and the château de la Roche-Pot. I have described the one and told about the other; it will all be found in my *Impressions de Voyage*. The drought had interrupted the service of steamboats for some time; however, on returning to Châlon, we learnt that a boat drawing eighteen inches of water only was going to attempt the voyage. We embarked next day about noon, and reached Mâcon, indeed, but it was impossible to go further: it was too much to expect eighteen inches of water of the Saône. Places in the carriages had been reserved for three days past. I was very simple-minded at that period. Alas! I must say I have kept that silly characteristic intact. Boatmen came seeing my predicament, and as the wind was favourable, proposed to row me to Lyons in six hours. I allowed them eight; they deemed there was no need for such an addition of time, and that I had been too generous. Consequently, we settled the fare, and they took me to a big boat in which a dozen innocents like myself were packed together. Among them were three or four who had a double right to this title—some poor babies of five or six months old, accompanied by their nurses. I made a grimace when I saw the company into which I was brought; but bah! six hours are soon passed! It was one o'clock in the afternoon, by seven we should be at Lyons. But, instead of starting at one, we did not leave till three. Our boatmen thought us too comfortable, seated on top of one another as we were, and they probably counted on putting a second row across us. Luckily, they did not succeed. After two hours of fruitless waiting, they at last unmoored. The wind kept the promise it had made us on starting pretty much for an hour, and

during that hour we made a league or a league and a half. Then the wind fell. I had thought that, should occasion arise, our boatmen would apply themselves to the oars; but no! we descended the Saône at the same rate as a drowned dog which floated twenty paces from us! Next day, at three in the afternoon, just at the same time as our drowned dog, which kept us company faithfully, we recognised the île Barbe. We reached Lyons fifty minutes later. My health must have been already much stronger to withstand the night I had just passed on the Saône. We stayed three days in Lyons, and, on the third, at three in the afternoon, we took carriage for Geneva. At six in the morning the conductor opened the carriage door, saying, "If the gentlemen would like to do a bit of the way on foot they will have time." It was an invitation offered us by our horses who found that the carriage was quite heavy enough to pull up the incline of Cerdon without us. This climb begins the first slopes of the Alps; it leads to the fort de l'Écluse, posted astride the road, under the arch of which they scrutinise passports. After three hours' walk, on coming from Saint-Genis the conductor, whom I had begged to tell me the exact moment when I got into Switzerland, turned round towards me and said—

"Monsieur, you are no longer in France."

"How far are we from Geneva?"

"An hour and a half's walk."

"Then let me get out and I will walk the remainder of the way."

The conductor complied with my request and, at the end of an hour and a half's walk, I entered the birthplace of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and of Pradier.

CHAPTER II

Great explanations about the bear-steak—Jacotot—An ill-sounding epithet—A seditious felt hat—The carabiniers who were too clever—I quarrel with King Charles-Albert over the Dent du Chat—Princes and men of intellect

I RETURNED to Florence in 1842 for a very sad and distressing ceremony; I returned to attend the funeral of the Duc d'Orléans.

It is one of the singular features of my life to have known all the princes; and, with the most Republican ideas imaginable, to have been attached to them with the deepest affection of my heart. Now, who informed me at Florence of the death of the Duc d'Orleans? Prince Jérôme-Napoléon. I had just dined at Quarto—a charming country-house four miles from Florence—with the father of the ex-King of Westphalia, when, taking me aside, he said—

"My dear Dumas, I am going to tell you news which will cause you much pain."

I looked at him with anxiety.

"Monseigneur," I said to him, "I have received news of my two children this morning; they are well; except for accidents which may have happened to them, I am prepared for anything."

"Well, the Duc d'Orléans is dead!"

I confess this came upon me like a thunderbolt. Uttering an exclamation and bursting into tears I threw myself into the prince's arms.

"Oh! monseigneur," I said to him, "I have cared for but two princes, for him and for you. For him more than for you, I frankly admit; now I have but you to care for."

Was it not a strange thing to see a man weeping

for a duke of Orleans in the arms of a Bonaparte? I left for Livorno that same night, and next day I went on board the steamer at Genoa. The sea was rough, and landed me quite done up in the City of Palaces; I found at *table d'hôte* a friend who had arrived from Naples more tired even than myself: he offered to return with me by post-chaise, but on condition we crossed by the Simplon, which he had never seen. I accepted. We hired a sort of cariole and started. When we had crossed the Simplon and got clear of the Valais, we pulled up at the door of the *Poste* inn at Martigny. The host, hat in hand, politely came and invited us to take a meal in his house in passing. We thanked him and said we had dined at Sion, so he retired as politely as he had come.

"What a delightful inn-keeper!" my friend said to me.

"You think so?"

"Why, yes."

"If I told him my name I think I should probably be obliged to give him a drubbing while we waited for our relay of horses."

"Why?"

"Because, instead of making capital out of a joke I played on him, he had the silliness to be vexed at it and to wish I was dead."

"You?"

"Oh yes, me!"

"Bah!"

"Just recall it to him and tell him that we will stay a little time if perchance he can give us a beef-steak of bear flesh."

"Hi! Monsieur! . . . *Monsieur le maître de l'hôtel!*" exclaimed my friend, before I had had time to stop him.

The *maître de l'hôtel* turned round.

"My companion here says he will stop for dinner with you if you have by chance a steak of bear flesh."

I have seen many faces express agitation in my life; in consequence of terrible news, unexpected accidents,

serious wounds . . . but I never saw any face more concerned than that of the unfortunate *maître de poste* at Martigny.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, seizing his hair with both hands, "again! always the same cry! . . . Is no traveller to pass by without making the same joke?"

"Yes!" resumed my companion, "I read about it in M. Alexandre Dumas's *Impressions de Voyage . . .*"

"The *Impressions de Voyage* by M. Alexandre Dumas!" shrieked the wretched inn-keeper; "are there still people who read it?"

"Why should they not read it?" I ventured to ask.

"Because it is an atrocious book, full of lies; people have been burned at the stake who did not deserve it as much as that man. . . . Oh! M. Alexandre Dumas!" went on the unlucky vendor of soup, passing from rage to exasperation, "if only I ever get hold of him in private one of these days! but I shall have to go to Paris to get even with him. He will not go through Switzerland again, he dare not! he knows I am waiting to strangle him: I have told him so. All right; if you see him, if you know him, tell him once more from me, tell him every time you meet him, tell it him over and over again."

He went into his house like a madman, like one furious and driven to despair.

"What is the matter with your master?" I asked the postilion. . . .

"Ah! people say he has been infected with a sort of craze, which a gentleman from Paris caused him when he passed by here."

"And so he wishes to kill the gentleman from Paris?"

"Yes, he wishes to kill him."

"Outright."

"Without mercy."

"Suppose the gentleman from Paris suddenly said to him, 'Here I am!' What would he do."

"Oh! he would fall down dead in a fit, without a doubt."

"All right, postilion. When you return, you tell your master that M. Alexandre Dumas has passed by, that he wishes him long life and all kinds of prosperity. Now start!"

"Ah! that's a good joke!" said the postilion, setting off at a galop. Ah! Yes, I'll tell him, indeed! he shall know it, and how he will tear his hair at not having recognised you. . . . Come! Grise, come, gee up!"

My companion was very thoughtful.

"Well," I asked him, "a penny for your thoughts?"

"I am trying to discover the reason for that man's hatred against you."

"You do not understand it?"

"No."

"You remember the bear beef-steak in my *Impressions de Voyage*?"

"Of course! it is the first thing that I read in it."

"Well, it was at that good fellow's house that the incident of M. Alexandre Dumas eating a bear-steak in 1832 happened."

"Well?"

"Many others like you read of the bear-steak; so, one fine day, a traveller, more curious, or with less appetite, than others said, when he looked at the menu—

"'Have you any bear?'

"'Excuse me?' the host replied.

"'I asked if you had any bear.'

"'No, monsieur, none.'

"And, for the moment, the incident was closed. Then one, two days or a week later, a second traveller puts his alpenstock in the corner behind the door, flings his hat on a chair, shakes the dust from his shoes and says to the *maître de l'hôtel*—

"'Ah! I am at Martigny, surely?'

"'Yes, monsieur.'

'At the *Hôtel de la Poste*?'

'This is the *Hôtel de la Poste*.'

'in consequence one can get bear to eat then.'

" ' I do not understand.'

" ' I say that this is where one can taste bear.'

" The *maître de l'hôtel* looked at the traveller in amazement.

" ' Why here more than anywhere else ? ' he asked.

" ' Because it was here that M. Dumas had it.'

" ' M. Dumas ? '

" ' Yes, M. Alexandre Dumas. . . . Do you not know M. Alexandre Dumas ? '

" ' No.'

" ' The author of *Henri III.*, of *Antony* and of *La Tour de Nesle* ? '

" ' I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance.'

" ' Ah ! he says, in his *Impressions de Voyage*, that he ate bear at your inn . . . but, as you have none in the house at the moment, we will not trouble about it : we will have it some other time. Come, what have you got ? '

" ' Monsieur can choose for himself, here is the menu ! '

" ' Oh ! I cannot be bothered ! Give me what you like : since you have no bear, I don't care what it is.'

" And, with a disgusted air, finding it all very poor, the second traveller ate the dinner they served him.

" Next day, or the day after, or the following week, a traveller came in who, without saying anything, put his knapsack down, seated himself at the first table he came to and knocked against a glass with a knife, shouting—

" ' Garçon ! '

" The waiter came.

" ' What can I do for you, monsieur ? '

" ' A bear-steak.'

" ' Ah ! ah ! '

" ' Be quick and let it be underdone ! '

" The waiter never budged.

" ' Well, don't you understand me, donkey ? '

" ' Only too well.'

" ' All right then, order my steak.'

" ' But monsieur seems to want a special sort of steak.'

"'A steak of bear's flesh.'

"'Yes . . . We haven't it.'

"'What, you haven't any?'

"'No.'

"'Go and fetch your master.'

"'But, monsieur, my master . . .'

"'Go and fetch your master!'

"'But, monsieur.'

"'I tell you to go and fetch your master!'

"The traveller rose with such imperiousness that the waiter saw there was only one thing for him to do—to obey. He disappeared saying—

"'I am going to fetch him. I am going.'

"'You asked to see me, monsieur,' said the *maître de l'hôtel* in five minutes' time.

"'Ah! that is all right!'

"'Had I only known monsieur specially wished to speak to me . . .'

"'I wished to see you because your waiter is such a fool!'

"'That is possible, monsieur.'

"'An impertinent fellow.'

"'Has he had the impudence to neglect monsieur?'

"'He is an idiot, and he will ruin your establishment.'

"'Oh! oh! this is becoming serious. . . . If monsieur will tell me what he has to complain of.'

"'Well! I ask him for a bear-steak and he pretends not to understand.'

"'Ah! ah! it is . . .'

"'Have you bear or have you not?'

"'Monsieur, allow me . . .'

"'Have you bear?'

"'Really, monsieur . . .'

"'Bear or death. Have you bear?'

"'Really, monsieur, no.'

"'You should have admitted it at once then,' said the traveller, reloading his knapsack.'

"'What is the matter, monsieur?'

"'I am going.'

"'Why are you going?'

"'Because I am going.'

"'But why?'

"'Because I only came to your cookshop to taste bear. As I find you haven't any, I am going to look for it elsewhere.'

"'Still, monsieur . . .'

"'Come, *furth*!' and out the traveller went, saying, 'It seems you show special favour to M. Alexandre Dumas; but it also seems to me that a traveller in Burgundy wines is worth much more attention than a man of letters.'

"The inn-keeper stands dumbfounded.

"Now, you know, my dear fellow, that blessed *Impressions de Voyage* has been widely read, printed and reprinted: not a day passed but some eccentric traveller would ask for a bear-steak. French and English appear to have gone to the *Hôtel de la Poste* to drive the unlucky inn-keeper to distraction. Never was Pipelet, when he refuses to give his hair to Cabrion, to Cabrion's friends and acquaintances, more unhappy, tormented or desperate than the unhappy, tormented and desperate *maître de poste* of Martigny. A French inn-keeper would have taken the bull by the horns and changed his signboard; instead of the words *Hôtel de la Poste*, he would have put, *Hôtel du Bifteck d'Ours*. He would have bought up all the bears in the surrounding mountains; and, when they fell short, he would have provided beef, wild boar, horse, anything, so long as it was flavoured with some unknown sauce or other. He would have made his fortune in three years' time and retired at the end of it, buying his stocks to the extent of 100,000 francs, and he would have blessed my name. The present man made his fortune all the same, but more slowly, and through such incessant fits of anger that he ruined his health—and cursed my name.

"What harm has that done you?"

"It is always disagreeable to be cursed, my friend."

"But, after all, what truth is there in your bear-steak story?"

"Some and none?"

"What do you mean by some and none?"

"Three days before I went by, a man had been on the hunt for a bear and had wounded it mortally; but, before it died, it had killed the man and devoured part of his head. In my capacity of dramatic poet, I put the thing into a scene, that is all. The same thing happened to me as did to Werner at the inn of Schwartzbach, to his drama of *Vingt Quatre Février*."

"What happened to Werner?"

"Ah! upon my word, my dear friend, you ought to buy my *Impressions de Voyage* and open the first volume and you will know."

Whereupon, we continued on our way.

That, dear readers, is the pure truth, revealed for the first time, concerning the bear-steak which made such a stir in the world twenty years ago. Ah, well! I have never been fortunate with my strokes of fame.

One of my creations, which had almost as European a celebrity as the bear-steak, was Jacotot; not the inventor of the famous method of orthography; but a Jacotot of my own; the Jacotot of my *Impressions de Voyage*.

"Ah! yes, yes, the waiter in the café at Aix."

Precisely, dear readers; you see, indeed, how celebrated Jacotot is since you remember his name."

"Who doesn't remember the name of Jacotot!"

"I can, then, say openly, that I made Jacotot's fortune, for he is rich and has retired; Jacotot has a town-house in Aix and a country-house on the lake of Bourget. Yet, like the master of the posting-inn at Martigny, Jacotot holds me in execration, he loathes me and curses me! The reason for such ingratitude? I wounded his *amour*

propre; again because of putting him in my book; the number of enemies my dramatic talent has made me is incalculable! Any man who is not, like myself, overcome with a passion for the picturesque, any writer who does not feel compelled to paint when he writes, who had occasion to bring Jacotot upon the scenes for the first time, would have said simply, 'Jacotot comes on.' He would not have thought it necessary to state whether Jacotot was beautiful or ugly, well dressed or ill, young or old. But to me '*Jacotot enters*' seemed insufficient, and I had the misfortune to say, 'Jacotot entered; *he was nothing but a coffee-house waiter.*' This was the first wounding epithet for Jacotot who, it is true, was a coffee-house waiter, but who, no doubt, desired to be taken for a solicitor's clerk. I went on: 'He stopped in front of us, a stereotyped smile *on his fat, stupid face,* which must have been seen to have been appreciated.'"

That was what really embroiled me with Jacotot, the physical portrait I drew of him; all the good I was able to say of him, which has immortalised him, has not effaced from his memory the unhappy epithet I applied to his face.

In the year of grace 1854, nearly a quarter of a century after the publication of the unlucky *Impressions de Voyage* which fell foul of many susceptibilities, there was a traveller on the road to Aix who had a desire to know Jacotot: he went to the café and did as I had done. He called Jacotot: the *maître du café* came to him.

"Monsieur," he said, "the person for whom you are inquiring has made his fortune and retired."

"Ah! *diable!*" said the traveller. "I wanted to see him."

"Oh! you can see him."

"Where?"

"At his home."

"Oh! but to disturb him, solely and simply to say

that I have a desire to see him is perhaps really a little too inquisitive."

"Eh! stay though, you can see him without disturbing him."

"How?"

"That is he, over there, against his door, with his hands in his pockets and his body in the sun."

"Thanks."

The traveller got up, went across to the other side of the square and passed two or three times in front of Jacotot. Jacotot perceived that it was he whom the traveller wanted; and, as he was a capital fellow, when his *amour propre* is not over-excited, he smiled at the traveller. The traveller was emboldened by the smile.

"You are M. Jacotot, I believe?" he asked him.

"Yes, monsieur, at your service."

"So you have retired?"

"Two years since, as you see! . . . I am a citizen, a good citizen now," and he struck his stomach with the palms of his two hands.

"I offer you my congratulations, Monsieur Jacotot."

"You are indeed good."

"I know some one who has not been injured by your bit of good fortune."

"Who, monsieur?"

"Alexandre Dumas, the author of the *Impressions de Voyage*."

Jacotot's face became discomposed.

"Alexandre Dumas," he repeated.

"Yes."

"Is it because he said I had a stupid face?" exclaimed Jacotot, slamming the door violently as he went into his house.

The traveller had paid his farewell call on Jacotot, for, from that moment, if Jacotot caught sight of him on one side, he turned away in another direction.

In the same country I have a third enemy, very much more serious than the two others, and for a thing of almost as little importance, and he is His Majesty Charles-Albert, King of Sardinia. During my sojourn at Aix I made two excursions : one to Chambéry and the other to the Dent du Chat. Both were made noteworthy : one by an act of great imprudence, the other by a serious accident ; imprudence and accident would probably have passed over unnoticed had I not pointed them out in those fatal *Impressions de Voyage*. The imprudence was to go into the capital of Savoy wearing grey hats, as my companions and I did. You will ask, dear readers, what imprudence there was in wearing grey hats instead of black felt ones. There would have been none in 1833, but it was very unwise in 1832 ; and here is an extract of a few lines from my *Impressions de Voyage*—

" At four p.m. of the same day we reached Chambéry. I will say nothing about the public monuments of the capital of Savoy ; I was not able to enter into any of them because I wore a grey hat. It seems that a dispatch from the Tuileries had called forth the strictest measures against the seditious felt, and that the King of Sardinia did not wish to be exposed to a war against his beloved brother Louis-Philippe d'Orléans over such a futile matter. As I insisted, and declaimed energetically against the injustice of such a proceeding, the Royal Carabiniers, who were on guard at the palace gate, said facetiously to me that, if I absolutely persisted, there was at Chambéry a building inside which they were allowed to take me, namely, the prison. As the King of France, in his turn, would probably not wish to be exposed to a war against his dear brother Charles-Albert, over so unimportant a personage as his ex-librarian, I replied to my interlocutors that they were doubtless very charming for Savoyards and very witty for carabiniers, but I would insist no longer."

Savoy is a singular country : Jacotot was angry because I said an injurious thing about him ; the carabiniers were

angry because I paid them a compliment. So much for the imprudence. Let us now pass to the accident.

After supper, a dozen bathers, joyous companions, four of whom, alas! are now dead, proposed, in order not to leave one another, to go and see the sun rise from the top of the Dent du Chat. It is a sharp-pointed mountain peak which owes its name to its shape, and its bare, verdureless cone looks down upon Aix. The suggestion was acceded to; they put on their boots and dressed for the journey, then they set out. I did the same as the others, although I have not much taste for making ascents; I suffer from giddiness; and, to be high up, even if there is no danger, is more painful to me than actual danger which may present itself under quite another form. As in the case of Chambéry, let me be permitted to quote a few passages from my *Impressions de Voyage*; it will absolve the reader from turning back to it—

"We began to climb at half-past twelve midnight; it was a strange sight, that march by torchlight. At two, three-quarters of our way were done, but the remaining part was so dangerous and difficult that our guides made us halt to wait for the first rays of dawn. When this appeared we continued our way, which soon became so steep that our breasts nearly touched the slope on which we were walking in single file. Each one displayed his skill and strength, clinging, with his hands, to the heath and little shrubs and, with his feet, to the roughness of the rock and to the inequalities in the ground. We heard the stones which we loosened roll down the slope of the mountain, which was as steep as a roof; and then we followed them with our eyes till we saw them fall into the lake, with its blue sheet, which lay stretched out a quarter of a league below us. Our guides themselves could not help us, as they were busy trying to discover the best way; but, from time to time, they advised us not to look behind us for fear of turning faint or giddy: and their admonitions, made in short, concise tones, told us the danger was very real.

"Suddenly, one of our comrades who followed im-

mediately after them uttered a cry which made our flesh creep. As a means of support he had tried to place his foot on a stone already shaken by the weight of those who had preceded him. The stone broke away and the branches to which he had also clung, not being strong enough to bear the weight of his body alone, broke between his hands.

" ' Catch hold of him ! ' shouted the guides.

" But this was easier said than done. Each one of us had already great difficulty in holding himself up. So he passed by us without a single one of us being able to stop him ; we thought he was lost and, with the perspiration of terror on our brows, we watched him breathlessly until he was close to Montaigu, the last of us all, and he stretched out a hand and seized him by the hair. For one moment it was doubtful if both would not fall ; it was a short but awful moment, and I will answer for it that none of those who were there will forget the length of the second, while we watched the two men swaying over a precipice of two thousand feet depth, not knowing whether they were going to be precipitated over, or succeed in catching hold of the ground again.

" We reached at last a little fir wood which, without making the path less steep, made it more comfortable because of the facility the trees offered us of catching hold of their branches or leaning against their trunks. The opposite border of the little forest almost touched the base of bare rock, whose shape has given its name to the mountain ; holes irregularly hollowed out in the stone afforded us a sort of staircase which led to the summit.

" Only two of us attempted this last climb; not that the journey was more difficult than that we have just accomplished, but it did not promise us a more extended view, and the one we had in front of us was far from compensating us for our fatigue and bruises. We therefore left them to climb up their steeple and we sat down to extract stones and thorns from ourselves. Meanwhile, the climbers reached the top of the mountain, and, as proof of having captured it, they lit a fire and smoked their cigars round it.

" They came down in a quarter of an hour, taking good care to put out the fire they had lit, curious though they

were to know if the smoke had been noticed down below. We ate a small meal, then our guides asked us if we wanted to return by the same route, or to take another and a longer one, but much easier. We unanimously chose the latter. By three o'clock we were in Aix, and, in the centre of the square, the gentlemen had the proud pleasure of still seeing the smoke of their beacon fire. I asked them if, now that I had had so much enjoyment, I might be allowed to go to bed. As every one probably felt the need of doing the same, they told me there was no objection. I believe I should have slept for thirty-six hours on end if I had not been awakened by a great noise. I opened my eyes, it was dark ; I went to the window, and I saw all the town of Aix in a commotion. The population, including children and old people, had come out on the public square, as in former times they did during riotings in Rome. Every one was talking at once, and snatching at glasses, and looking up into the air fit to break their spines ; I thought there must be an eclipse of the moon. I dressed quickly to go and see my share of the phenomenon, and went down armed with my spy-glasses. The whole atmosphere was coloured with a red reflection, the sky seemed inflamed ; the Dent du Chat was on fire ! The fire lasted for three days. On the fourth, they brought our smokers in a bill of 37,500 francs odd. The smokers thought the sum a little too strong for a dozen arpents of wood, the situation of which made it impossible to get at. Consequently, they wrote to our ambassador at Turin to try to get something cut down in the bill. He must have managed it very well, because the bill returned to them in a week's time to be paid was reduced to 780 francs.

" Thanks to my grey hat, which had aroused the susceptibilities of the Chambéry Carabiniers, and to the part I had taken in the excursion and the firing of the Dent du Chat the states of King Charles-Albert were shut against me for six years."

I told in due place how, in 1835, I was shamefully driven out of Genoa and how triumphantly I returned there in 1838. May I be permitted a slight digression here on princes and ship captains ?

I have noticed that, in general, neither of them like

men of intellect. Indeed, if a man of cultivated mind find himself at a prince's table, at the end of ten minutes, without complete dumbness on his part, it is the man of mind who will be the true prince, to whom people will address their conversation, it is he who will be made to speak, it is he to whom they will listen. The prince by birth is completely annihilated—he no longer exists as such, and is only distinguishable from other guests in two ways: whilst other guests are talking he is silent; whilst they laugh he sulks. You will say, in such a case, if the cultured man is really clever he will keep silence in order to let the prince assert his princehood. But then the clever man will be no longer such—he will be a courtier. Numbers of clever men have been disgraced because of their abilities. Cite me one instance of a fool disgraced for his folly. It is the same with ship captains as with princes.

Whenever a clever man is on board and the weather is fine, the captain is nowhere. People crowd round the man of intellect, whilst the captain paces alone on the poop. It is true, that, if there is a storm the captain becomes captain once more, but only so long as the storm lasts. You tell me there are princes who have intellect. Of course! I have known, and still know, some; but their estate compels them to hide it. It was impossible to have a more charming, delicate or graceful mind than that of M. le duc d'Orléans; and yet no one could hide it better than he could. One day, when he had made one of those delightful repartees with which his conversation abounded when he had to do with artists, I asked him—

"*Mon Dieu*, monseigneur, how is it that you, who are one of the wittiest men I know, have so little reputation for being a wit?"

He began to laugh.

"How delicious you are!" he said; "do you suppose I allow myself to show wit to everybody?"

"But, monseigneur, you show it to me, and at your very best too."

"*Parbleu!* because I know you are equally witty, you are always as witty as, if not more than, I; but with imbeciles, my dear Monsieur Dumas! . . . I have enough to do to make them forgive me for being a prince, without giving them more to forgive by being a man of wit. . . . So it is agreed that, when you wish, not so much to give me pleasure as to do me a service, you must say that I am an imbecile!"

Poor dear prince!

CHAPTER III

22 July 1832

THE day after the magnificent fire, one of our bathers, who had returned from Chambéry, entered the room where we met together, saying—

"Messieurs, have you heard the news?"

"No."

"The Duc de Reichstadt is dead."

The Duc de Reichstadt had, indeed, died on 22 July, at eight minutes past five in the morning, the anniversary day on which letters-patent from the emperor had appointed him Duc de Reichstadt, and on which he had learnt of the death of his father the Emperor Napoleon. His last words had been—

"*Ich gehe unter! Mutter! Mutter!*" (I am sinking —Mother! Mother!)

Thus it was that, in a foreign language, the child of 1811 bid adieu to the world!

The inquiries we made concerning the young prince, that pale historic figure which faded from day to day whilst the phantom figure of his father grew bigger and bigger, enable us to give a few details about his brief life and sad death that are perhaps not known.

Victor Hugo, the man to whom one must always turn when it is a question of measuring the giant Napoleon, wrote the poetic history of the young prince in a few strophes. Let us be permitted to quote them. To say we love the exiled poet, comforts our heart; to say that we admire him, assuages our regrets. The tomb is deaf,

but, perhaps, exile is even still more dear. Our voice is one that our friends will hear in the grave and in exile. Yesterday, the Duc d'Orléans; to-day, Hugo.

"Mil huit cent onze!—ô temps où des peuples sans nombre
Attendaient, prosternés sous un nuage sombre,
Que le ciel eût dit oui!
Sentaient trembler sous eux les États centenaires,
Et regardaient le Louvre, entouré de tonnerres
Comme un mont Sinaï!

Courbés comme un cheval qui sent venir son maître,
Ils se disaient entre eux: 'Quelqu'un de grand va naître;
L'immense empire attend un héritier demain.
Qu'est-ce que le Seigneur va donner à cet homme
Qui, plus grand que César, plus grand même que Rome,
Absorbe dans son sort le sort du genre humain?'

Comme ils parlaient, la nue éclatante et profonde
S'entr'ouvrit, et l'on vit se dresser sur le monde
L'homme prédestiné!
Et les peuples béants ne purent que se taire;
Car ses deux bras levés présentaient à la terre
Un enfant nouveau-né!"

The child was the King of Rome,—the one who had just died. When his father had shown him on the Tuileries balcony, as Louis XIII. had shown Louis XIV. from the balcony of Saint-Germain, he was the heir to the most powerful crown in existence; at that period, the emperor drew after him in his orbit one half of the Christian population; his orders extended and were obeyed over a space which included nineteen degrees of latitude; and eighty millions of men cried "*Vive Napoléon!*" in eight different tongues.

But let us return to the poet—

"O revers, ô leçons! Quand l'enfant de cet homme
Eut reçu pour hochet la couronne de Rome;
Lorsqu'on l'eut revêtu d'un nom qui retentit;
Lorsqu'on eut bien montré son front royal qui tremble
Au peuple, émerveillé qu'on puisse tout ensemble
Être si grand et si petit!

Quand son père eut, pour lui, gagné bien des batailles ;
Lorsqu'il eut épaissi de vivantes murailles
Autour du nouveau-né, riant sur son chevet ;
Quand ce grand ouvrier, qui savait comme on fonde,
Eut, à coups de cognée, à peu près fait le monde
Selon le songe qu'il rêvait ;

Quand tout fut préparé par les mains paternelles,
Pour doter l'humble enfant de splendeurs éternelles,
Lorsqu'on eut de sa vie assuré les relais ;
Quand, pour loger un jour ce maître héréditaire,
On eut enraciné, bien avant dans la terre,
Le pied de marbre des palais ;

Lorsqu'on eut, pour sa soif, posé devant la France
Un vase tout rempli du vin de l'espérance . . .
Avant qu'il eût goûté de ce poison doré,
Avant que de sa lèvre il eût touché la coupe,
Un Cosaque survint, qui prit l'enfant en croupe,
Et l'emporta tout effaré ! "

The story of the poor child can only be made up out of contradictory evidence. Let us borrow from M. de Montbel a letter which tells of the impatience with which the announcement of his birth was waited for in the imperial city of Vienna—

"VIENNA, *26 March*

"It would be difficult to do justice to the impatience with which they here expected the news of the delivery of Her Majesty the Empress of the French. On Sunday the 24th, at ten in the morning, uncertainty was at an end: the telegraphic dispatch which announced the happy news was transmitted to the Ambassador of France four days and one hour after that event, by Major Robelleau, first aide-de-camp to General Desbureaux, Commandant of the Fifth Military Division. The report of it soon spread abroad and caused general joy.

"M. de Tettenborn, aide-de-camp to Prince de Schwartzenberg, left Paris by day, and, arriving fourteen hours after Chevalier Robelleau, confirmed the happy news. Finally, a courier from the French Cabinet arrived on the morning of the 25th, bearing the official letter by which the Emperor Napoleon announced the birth to his august father-in-law. His Majesty's satisfaction was

extremely great, and was shared by the whole Court. The Ambassador of France being at home indisposed, the first Secretary to the Embassy went to the palace, was taken to the emperor's cabinet and had the honour of handing to His Majesty his Master the Emperor's letter. On that same Sunday, the day chamberlain was sent by the emperor to the Ambassador of France to congratulate him. *The ambassador received the congratulations equally of M. le comte de Metternich*, and of the whole diplomatic corps.

"To-morrow, there will be a grand drawing-room at the Court on the occasion of the birth of the King of Rome. Every one says it will be a very brilliant gathering."

Perhaps it will be interesting to compare the congratulation of M. le comte de Metterinch to the Ambassador to France—dated 25 March 1811—with the information given on 31 October 1815 by the same Comte de Metternich, to M. le baron de Sturmer, Commissary to His Imperial and Apostolic Majesty at the Isle of Saint-Helena—

"The allied powers having agreed to take the most particular measures to render any enterprise on the part of Napoleon Bonaparte impossible, it has been concluded and decided between them that he shall be taken to the Isle of Saint-Helena, that he shall there be entrusted to the care of the British Government; that the Courts of Austria, of Russia and of Prussia shall send their agents to reside there, to make sure of his presence but without being charged with the responsibility of guarding him; and that His Most Christian Majesty shall also be invited to send a French agent to the place of Napoleon Bonaparte's detention.

"In consequence of this decision, sanctioned by special agreement between the Courts of Austria and Russia, and Great Britain and Prussia, dated from Paris, 2 August 1815, His Majesty the Emperor, our august master, has condescended to appoint you to reside at Saint-Helena in the capacity of his representative.

"The guarding of Napoleon Bonaparte being specially
Lord to the British Government, you are not charged
Au pesponsibility on that head; but you can make
Étrnce by what means and in what manner

you like in concert with the governor. You must be careful to be convinced of his existence by the evidence of your own eyes, and you must draw up an official report, which must be signed by you and your colleagues and countersigned by the governor; each of the agents wil be expected to submit a copy of this report every month to his Court, furnished with their signatures and a countersign from the governor.

"You will take the greatest care to avoid any sort of communication with Napoleon Bonaparte and the individuals of his suite. You will positively refuse any overtures they might seek to set up with you; and, in case they allow direct approaches, you will immediately report such to the governor.

"Although you will not be at all responsible for the guarding of Bonaparte, nor of the persons comprising his suite, if it comes to your knowledge that they are employing means to evade or to keep up communications outside, you will warn the governor without delay.

"Your functions will be confined to those indicated in the present instructions. You will abstain with most scrupulous punctiliousness from all solitary action, our positive intention being that you act in concert with your colleagues and always in accord with them and with the governor. You will make use of every opportunity that may present itself to convey your reports direct to us."

"METTERNICH"

"PARIS, 31 *October* 1815"

So much for the political view: now let us look at the poetic—

"Oui, l'aigle, un soir, planait aux voûtes éternelles,
Lorqu'un grand coup de vent lui cassa les deux ailes;
Sa chute fit dans l'air un foudroyant sillon;
Tous alors sur son nid fondirent avec joie;
Chacun selon ses dents se partagea la proie:
L'Angleterre prit l'aigle, et l'Autriche l'aiglon.

Vous savez ce qu'on fit du géant historique.
Pendant six ans, on vit, loin derrière l'Afrique,
Sous les verrous des rois prudents,
—Oh! n'exilons personne! oh! l'exil est impie!—
Cette grande figure en sa cage accroupie,
Ployée et les genoux aux dents.

Encor, si ce banni n'eût rien aimé sur terre !
Mais les cœurs de lion sont les vrais cœurs de père ;
Il aimait son fils, ce vainqueur !
Deux choses lui restaient dans sa cage inféconde :
Le portrait d'un enfant et la carte du monde,
Tout son génie et tout son cœur !

Le soir, quand son regard se perdait dans l'alcôve,
Ce qui se remuait dans cette tête chauve,
Ce que son œil cherchait dans le passé profond,
Tandis que ses geôliers, sentinelles placées
Pour guetter nuit et jour le vol de ses pensées,
En regardaient passer les ombres sur son front,

Ce n'était pas toujours, sire, cette épopée
Que vous aviez naguère écrite avec l'épée,
Arcole, Austerlitz, Montmirail ;
Ni l'apparition des vieilles pyramides,
Ni le pacha du Caire et ses chevaux numides
Qui mordaient le vôtre au poitrail ;

Ce n'était pas ce bruit de bombe et de mitraille
Que vingt ans sous ses pieds avait fait la bataille
Déchaînée en noirs tourbillons,
Quand son souffle poussait sur cette mer troublée
Les drapeaux frissonnants penchés dans la mêlée,
Comme les mâts des bataillons ;

Ce n'était pas Madrid, le Kremlin et le Phare,
La diane au matin fredonnant sa fanfare,
Les bivacs sommeillant dans les feux étoilés,
Les dragons chevelus, les grenadiers épiques,
Et les rouges lanciers fourmillant dans les piques,
Comme des fleurs de pourpre en l'épaisseur des blés ;

Non, ce qui l'occupait, c'est l'ombre blonde et rose
D'un bel enfant qui dort la bouche demi-close,
Gracieux comme l'Orient ;
Tandis qu'avec amour sa nourrice enchantée,
D'une goutte de lait au bout du sein restée,
Agace sa lèvre en riant !

Le père, alors, posait les coudes sur sa chaise ;
Son cœur plein de sanglots se dégonflait à l'aise ;
Il pleurait d'amour éperdu . . .

Sois béni, pauvre enfant, tête aujourd'hui glacée,
Seul être qui pouvait distraire sa pensée
Du trône du monde perdu !

Tous deux sont morts ! Seigneur, votre droite est terrible !
Vous avez commencé par le maître invincible,
Par l'homme triomphant ;
Puis vous avez enfin complété l'ossuaire.
Dix ans vous ont suffi pour filer le suaire
Du père et de l'enfant !

Gloire, jeunesse, orgueil, biens que la tombe emporte !
L'homme voudrait laisser quelque chose à la porte ;
Mais la mort lui dit : 'Non !'
Chaque élément retourne où tout doit redescendre !
L'air reprend la fumée et la terre la cendre ;
L'oubli reprend le nom."

I decidedly prefer poetry to politics. Do you not agree with me, dear reader ? Now, how did the poor exiled child live and die ; the poor eaglet that fell out of its nest ? That is what we are going to tell in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

Edict unbaptizing the King of Rome—Anecdotes of the childhood of the Duc de Reichstadt—Letter of Sir Hudson Lowe announcing the death of Napoleon

IT was at Schönbrünn, in the same palace in which the emperor lived during 1805, after Austerlitz, and, in 1809, after Wagram, that Marie-Louis and her son were received by the Imperial family of Austria. As the first care of England had been to despoil Napoleon of his title of Emperor, so the first care of Francis II. was to take away the name of Napoleon from his grandson.

On 22 July 1818 the Emperor of Austria published the following edict :—

"We, Francis II., by the grace of God, Emperor of Austria; King of Jerusalem, Hungary, Bohemia, of Lombardy and of Venice, of Dalmatia, Croatia, Esclavonia, Gallicia, Lodomeria and Illyria; Archduke of Austria, Duke of Lorraine, of Saltzburg, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, the high and low Silesia; Grand-Prince of Transylvania; Margrave of Moravia; Count-Prince of Hapsburg and of the Tyrol, etc. etc.; would have it known that—As we find that, in consequence of the act of the Vienna Congress and the negotiations which have since taken place in Paris with our principal allies, in putting into execution in the matter of determining the title, rank and personal relations of Prince François Joseph-Charles, son of our beloved daughter Marie-Louise, Archduchess of Austria, Duchess of Parma, of Plaisance and of Guastalla, we have accordingly decreed as follows :—

"1. We give to Prince François-Joseph-Charles, son of our beloved daughter the Archduchess Marie-Louise, the

title of Duc de Reichstadt, and we at the same time command that in future all our authorities and every private person shall give him, when addressing him either by word of mouth or in writing, at the beginning of the speech, or heading of a letter, the title of Most Serene Duke, and in the text that of Most Serene Highness.

" 2. We permit him to have and to make use of special armorial bearings : to wit, gules with fesse of gold, two lions passant with their backs turned to the right, one in chief the other in point ; one oval placed on a ducal mantle and stamped with a ducal crown ; for support two griffins, sable armed, picked out and crowned with gold, holding banners on which the ducal arms shall be repeated.

" 3. Prince François Joseph-Charles, Duc de Reichstadt, will take rank in the Court and throughout the whole extent of our Empire, immediately after the princes of our family and the Archdukes of Austria.

" Two identical copies of the present declaration and ordinance, signed by us, have been dispatched to inform every one whose business it is to conform to them. One copy has been deposited in our private family archives of Court and State. Issued in our capital and residence of Vienna, the 22nd of July of the year 1818, the twenty-seventh of our reign. FRANCOIS "

It was, as one can see, impossible better to conceal this poor intruder, of which the family was ashamed. There was no more mention of his being a Frenchman, or his name of Napoleon, than if France had not existed or than if it had never had an Empire. He will no longer have any family name : he will have the name of a duchy ; he will not have that of *Majesty* or *Sire* ; he is to be Most Serene Highness. Of the French Eagle, the eagle which in 1804 flew from the Pyramids to Vienna, which in 1814 flew from steeple to steeple as far as the towers of Notre-Dame, there is no more question than of the name of the nationality ; the Duke of Reichstadt will have *two lions d'or passant upon gules*, like a count of the Holy Empire—not even the Buonaparte star ; not even

the bees of the isle of Elba. He will take rank at Court after the princes of the Imperial family. Thus, he is not even a prince of the Imperial family in his own right through his mother!—Silence as to his father! He has no father and never had; moreover, the father he might have had calls himself simply, or is so called by Sir Hudson Lowe, *General Bonaparte*. True, there is a future for the poor disinherited one in the love of his grandfather, who worships him; if he behaves himself well, he will be a colonel in an Austrian or a Hungarian regiment! There was also the future of Marcellus and the one that Providence is keeping for him out of its profound pity! And yet the poor child remembered; and that was his martyrdom. One day—he was scarcely six years old—he came up to the emperor, leant against his knees, and said—

"Dear grandfather, is it not true that when I was in Paris I had pages?"

"Yes," replied the emperor, "I believe you had."

"Is it not true, too, that they called me the King of Rome?"

"Yes. You were called King of Rome."

"Well, then, grandpapa, what does being King of Rome mean?"

"It is useless to explain it to you, as you are no longer it."

"But why am I not?"

"My child," replied the emperor, "when you are grown up, it will be easy to instruct you on that point. For the moment, I will just tell you that, in addition to my title of Emperor of Austria, I join that of King of Jerusalem, without having any sort of power over the city. Very well, you are King of Rome as I am King of Jerusalem."

Another time the young prince was playing with lead soldiers, amongst which were a good number of irregular Cossacks. A painter, M. Hummel, who was painting his portrait, came to him.

"Have you ever seen Cossacks, monseigneur?" he asked.

"Yes, certainly, I have seen them," replied the child: "they were Cossacks who escorted us when we left France."

The painter asked M. Dietrichstein, his tutor, when the prince's portrait was finished, "With what order ought I to decorate His Highness, Monsieur le Comte?"

"With the Order of Saint-Stephen, which His Majesty the Emperor of Austria sent him in his infancy."

"But, Monsieur le Comte," said the child, "I have many others besides that!"

"Yes, monseigneur; but you do not wear them any longer."

"Why?"

"Because they have been abolished."

Poor child! it was not the orders that had been abolished; but his fortune which had fallen.

At that age, the Duc de Reichstadt was perfectly beautiful, with great blue eyes and rose-leaf complexion, and long, fair, curly hair falling on to his shoulders. All his movements were full of grace and prettiness; he spoke French with the accent peculiar to Parisians. He had to learn German, and it was a great business and a daily and hourly struggle and difficulty.

"If I speak German," he said, "I shall not be French any more."

However, the Duc de Reichstadt was obliged to resign himself to learn M. de Metternich's tongue, and it was the one he constantly spoke when he had learned it with the princes of the Imperial family.

One day, a courier from M. de Rothschild arrived in Vienna; he brought great news, news which, in former times, would have been announced by comets and earthquakes: Napoleon had died on May 1821! The news reached Vienna on 22 July—the day on which, three years previously, the Duc de Reichstadt had lost his

name; the day on which, eleven years later, he was to lose his life.

The Comte de Dietrichstein was absent, and the emperor charged M. Foresti with the telling of the fatal news to the young duke, who had just reached his tenth birthday. M. Foresti adored the prince; he had been with him since 1815. He broke the news with all kinds of circumlocution, but, at the first words he uttered, the prince said—

"My father is dead, is he not?"

"Monseigneur . . ."

"He is dead?"

"Indeed, yes!"

"How could one want him to live . . . over there!" exclaimed the child, bursting into tears.

Contrary to the custom of Imperial etiquette, he wore mourning for a year; he insisted on it when they tried to make him give it up. They appealed to the emperor, who replied—

"Leave it to the child's own heart."

If you wish to know in what fashion the news was officially announced to the Court of Vienna, see the original letter of Sir Hudson Lowe to Baron Sturmer—

"SAINT-HELENA, *27 May* 1821

"MONSIEUR LE BARON,—He is no more! A disease which, according to the opinion current in his family, was hereditary, carried him to the grave on the 5th of this month: tumour and cancer of the stomach near the pylorus. On opening the body, with the consent of the persons of his entourage, they discovered an ulcer close to the pylorus which caused adherence to the liver; and, on opening the stomach, they could trace the progress of the disease. The interior of the stomach was almost entirely a *mass of cancerous disease, or of scirrhous portions advancing the cancer.* His father died of the same disease at the age of thirty-six; it should have struck him down when he was on the throne of France

at the hour fixed by fate, *according to his own way of thinking on the subject.* He was not confined to his room until 17 March ; but a change had been noticeable in him since last November, an unusual pallor and a peculiar way of walking. He, however, took exercise twice a day, generally in a little carriage ; but his paleness and weakness seemed always to persist.

" He was offered the advice of English doctors, but he would not receive any visit from them until 1 April, the month before his death. It was Professor Antomarchi who attended him before this period and continued to do so to his decease : it was he, too, who opened the body in the presence of nearly every doctor on the island. Dr. Arnott, of the 20th Regiment, a very clever and experienced man, was called in to see him on 1 April, and continued to attend him to the last. He has notified his gratitude to him by bequeathing him a gold snuff-box, the last he used, on which he engraved with his own hand the letter N. He has also left him a sum of money (five hundred pounds).

" Comte Montholon is the principal depositary of his last wishes ; Comte Bertrand only came second.

" He had strongly urged Comte Bertrand to do his utmost to make peace with me, saving always his sense of honour : I was not even told of this. He made advances, and, as I have no rancour in my disposition (as far as a person can judge of himself), I did not repulse them.

" It was, however, all along more on account of the pretensions of the great marshal and his wounded pride, rather than those of the emperor, that caused matters to go wrong here from the very first ; and from information received, it is evident that towards the end the emperor began to see this.

" There is a codicil to his will by which all the effects here are left to Comtes Bertrand and Montholon and to Marchand. Montholon is the principal executor. They knew nothing, or they said they knew nothing, of the will.

" In view of the time you spent here, I am induced to think that these few details will be specially interesting to you, and I will not make excuses for intruding them upon you. Give my compliments and those of Lady

Lowe to Madame la baronne de Sturmer, and, believe me always, Your faithful and obedient Servant,

"H. Lowe, M.P."

"*P.S.*—Bonaparte had himself guessed the cause of his illness. Some time before his death, he desired that his body should be opened, in order, as he told Bertrand and Montholon, to discover if there were any means of saving his son from the malady.

"Excuse my scrawl.

"H. L."

Do you notice that, in no part of the letter is the name of the dead man used? It is only in the postscript that it falls from the pen of the herald of death.

Was it not because the gaoler was ashamed to pronounce the name of his captive; the executioner felt remorse in pronouncing the name of the sufferer? When Napoleon was dead the whole world turned its attention, which had been divided between Schönbrünn and Saint-Helena, solely towards Schönbrünn.

CHAPTER V

Prince Metternich is appointed to teach the history of Napoleon to the Duc de Reichstadt—The duke's plan of political conduct—The poet Barthélemy at Vienna—His interviews with Count Dietrichstein—Opinion of the Duc de Reichstadt on the poem *Napoléon en Égypte*

"PRINCE METTERNICH," says M. de Montbel, "was expressly charged to teach the Duc de Reichstadt the *exact and complete* history of Napoleon."

What irony! To charge the man who signed the instructions of M. de Sturmer, the representative of Austria at Saint-Helena, to teach the son the *exact and complete* history of the father whose name the son no longer bore, whose title and arms he no longer carried!

Poor prisoner! Could they but have added this torture to thy agony by saying to thee, "Thy son only knows thee through the appreciation and according to the narrative of M. de Metternich!"

"I desire," said the Emperor Francis to the Prime Minister, "that the duke should respect the memory of his father, take example from his great qualities and learn to know his faults in order to avoid them and be warned against their fatal influence. Speak to the prince about his father as you would like people to speak of you to your own son. Do not, because of that, hide the truth from him, but instruct him, I repeat, to honour his memory."

"Henceforth," says M. de Montbel, with an artlessness which might very well be intended more for sarcasm than simplicity, "M. de Metternich directed the Duc de Reich-

stadt in his superior historical studies. By putting before him unexceptionable documents, he accustomed him to know the good faith of factions and the justice of party spirit ; he tried to form his mind to habits of sane criticism, to enlighten his reason by teaching him to appraise actions and events from their causes as well as judge them from results. The Duc de Reichstadt received this advanced education with great enthusiasm : the justice and penetration of his mind made him fully appreciate its importance. In proportion as he read works relative to the history of our days *he consulted the Prince Metternich in all his doubts*, he loved to question his experience and his recognised cleverness in many great events in which he had taken an active part. From this time the young duke displayed habitual eagerness to be near M. de Metternich."

The poor child's whole life was henceforth to be contained in the few lines we have just quoted.

Once, when he met the emperor and the prince together, he went up to them and said—

" The chief object of my life ought to be that I should not be unworthy of my father's renown ; I shall attain this noble end, as far as it is in my power. I shall some day succeed in making one of his high qualities my own by avoiding the rocks they made him encounter. I shall fail in the duties his memory lays upon me if I become the plaything of factions and the tool of intrigues. The son of Napoleon can never descend to the despicable rôle of an adventurer ! "

From the moment the Duc de Reichstadt showed such reasonableness, M. de Metternich and the Emperor of Austria had henceforth nothing more to fear.

It was about this time, and when the political education of the young prince had been finished by M. de Metternich, that Méry and Barthélemy published, on 10 November 1828, their poem, *Napoléon en Égypte*. The tremendous success of the poem is well known. Henceforward one pious idea sprang up in their hearts and in their minds ;

one of them would go to Vienna and offer to the young duke the epic poem, the hero of which is his father. Barthélemy went. We will let him describe his pilgrimage, and will afterwards relate the effect his presence produced in Vienna.

" The object of my journey being to be presented to the Duc de Reichstadt and to offer our poem to him, you may imagine I neglected no possible means of attaining it. Among the numbers of people who testified some interest in the matter, some were entirely without influence, others, with some reason, feared to mix themselves up in an affair of this nature. So I found myself reduced to being my own adviser and protector. I thought that, instead of making use of roundabout ways, which would have drawn down serious suspicions as to my peaceful intentions, it would be better to approach the object of my journey at Vienna. Accordingly, I presented myself to the Comte de Czernin, who is the emperor's *Oberhofmeister*, an office which I believe answers to that of grand chamberlain. The venerable old man received me with a kindness and complaisancy which touched me much ; and when I propounded to him the object of my visit, he did not seem at all surprised at it : only he told me to address myself to Comte Dietrichstein, who was specially responsible for the young prince's education, and he even wished me to introduce myself under his auspices. I did not lose a moment, on quitting Comte de Czernin, but presented myself immediately to M. Dietrichstein. It gave me genuine pleasure to be in the company of one of the most amiable and highly accomplished lords of the Court of Vienna. To the office of first tutor to the Duc de Reichstadt he added the office of director of the library, and, in view of this latter title, I could boldly put forward my condition as a man of letters. He indeed told me that our names and works were known to him ; that he had even taken the trouble to send to France for all the brochures which we had published up to that time, and that he was impatiently awaiting our last poem. As I had armed myself with a copy ready for any opportunity, I hastened to offer him one, and even to write and sign a dedication to him inside it, which

appeared to please him much. Encouraged by this reception, I thought it a propitious moment to make a decisive overture.

"'Monsieur le Comte,' I said to him, 'as you have shown such great kindness to me, I will venture to pray you to help me in the business that has brought me to Vienna. I have come with the sole object of presenting this book to the Duc de Reichstadt; no one can second me better in my design than his head-tutor. I hope that you will indeed accede to my request.'

"At the first words of this humble, verbal request, the count's face assumed an expression not so much of displeasure as of uneasiness and constraint; he seemed to be amiable enough to have emboldened me to make the demand, and, no doubt, he would have preferred not to be under the necessity of answering me. After a few minutes' silence, he said to me—

"'Is it really true that you have come to Vienna to see the young prince? . . . Who can have encouraged you in such a proceeding? Is it possible that you have reckoned on your journey being successful? They must indeed have false, and even ridiculous, notions in France about what goes on here? Do you not know that the politics of France and those of Austria are equally opposed to it, and that no stranger whatever, especially not a Frenchman, can be presented to the prince? What you ask is, therefore, totally impossible. I am truly sorry that you have taken such a long and troublesome journey without any chance of success,' etc., etc.

"I replied that I had no commission from anybody to come to Austria; that it was my own action, and that I had decided on the journey without outside pressure; that in France it was generally thought not to be difficult to be presented to the Duc de Reichstadt, and that they had even been assured that he received the French with most particular kindliness; that, besides, the precautionary measures which kept foreigners away did not seem to me to apply to me, simply a man of letters, or to an inconspicuous citizen, who had never filled any political rôle or office.

"'I perceive,' I added, 'that my zeal may seem exaggerated to you; yet reflect that we have just pub-

lished a poem on Napoleon. Is it, then, strange that we should wish to present it to his son? Do you think a literary man has a hidden object? You only have to convince yourself to the contrary. I do not ask an interview with the prince without witnesses: it shall be before you, before ten persons if you like, and if a single word escapes from me which can alarm the most suspicious political feeling, I consent to end my days in an Austrian prison.'

"The tutor replied that all the rumours spread abroad through France on the subject of persons presented to the Duc de Reichstadt were completely false: that he was persuaded that the object of my journey was purely literary, and detached from all political thought; but that, nevertheless, it was impossible for him to go beyond his orders; that the strictest guard prevented this kind of interview; that the measures taken were not the result of momentary caprice, but of a constant system adopted by both the Courts; that it was not applicable to me alone, but to all who attempted to approach the prince, and that I should be wrong to feel myself especially hurt on account of it.

"'In fact,' he added, 'these rigorous measures should be excused on the ground of fear of an attempt upon his person.'

"'But,' I said to him, 'an attempt of that nature is always to be apprehended on behalf of the Duc de Reichstadt, for the duke is not surrounded by guards. A resolute man could always gain access to him, and one second would suffice to commit a crime! Your watchfulness is, therefore, at fault in this respect. Now you, perhaps, fear that too free conversation with foreigners may reveal secrets to him or inspire him with dangerous hopes; but, with all your power, Monsieur le Comte, is it possible for you to prevent a letter, a petition, some warning, being transmitted to him, openly or clandestinely, whether during a walk, or at the theatre, or in any other place? For instance, if, instead of having frankly applied to you, I had posted myself in his way; if I had boldly gone up to him, and, in your very presence, had handed him a copy of *Napoléon en Égypte* . . . you can very well see how I could have ruined all your precautions, and

I could have fulfilled my object, though, I confess, it would have been by violent means; but then, it is none the less true that the prince would have received my copy, and would have read it, or, at least, would have known the title of it.'

"M. Dietrichstein made me a reply which froze me with astonishment—

"'Listen, monsieur; be very sure that the prince only hears or sees or reads what we wish him to read or see or hear. If he received a letter, an envelope, a book, which had evaded our vigilance, and it came to him without passing through our hands, believe me, his first care would be to hand it to us before opening it; he would not decide to look at it until we had pronounced he could do so safely.'

"'After that, Monsieur le Comte, it seems to me that the son of Napoleon is very far from being as free as in France he is supposed to be!'

"Answer—'The prince is not a prisoner . . . but he is in a quite peculiar position. Please do not press me any further with your questions: I cannot satisfy you thoroughly: give up the plan which brought you here. I repeat, it is an absolute impossibility.'

"'Very well, you take away all hope from me! I can certainly not apply to any one else after your decision, and I feel it is useless to renew my entreaties; but, at all events, you cannot refuse to give him this copy in the name of the authors. He has no doubt a library, and the book is not dangerous enough to be placed on the Index.'

"M. Dietrichstein shook his head irresolutely. I saw it was painful to him to overwhelm me with two refusals on the same day; so, not wishing to compel him to be too explicit, I bade him good-bye, begging him to read the poem, to convince himself that it contained nothing seditious, and hoping that, being convinced, he would consent to favour my second request.

"About a fortnight later, I returned to the head-tutor and resumed my former importunities. He was amazed at my persistency.

"'I really do not understand you!' he said to me; 'you place too much importance on seeing the prince.

Be satisfied to know that he is happy, that he is without ambition. His career is all mapped out: he will never go near France; *he will not even think of doing it.* Repeat all this to your compatriots; disabuse their minds, if it be possible. I do not ask you to keep what I have told you secret; quite the reverse: I beg you, on your return to France, to announce it, and even to write of it if you like. As for the placing of your copy, do not count on it. Your book is extremely beautiful as poetry; but it is dangerous for the son of Napoleon. Your style is full of imagination and vivacity of description; these qualities, and the colouring you give to history, all might excite enthusiasm in his young head and vivify the germs of ambition, and these, not being able to produce any result, would only serve to disgust him with his actual position. He knows all he ought to know about history,—that is to say, dates and names. You must see, after this, that your book cannot be suitable for him.'

"I still insisted for some time; but I soon saw that the head-tutor only listened to me out of civility. I did not wish to exhaust myself over useless prayers, and therefore, disabused of my innocent chimera, I looked upon the visit as a farewell audience and only thought of returning to France.

"Up to the moment of my departure I continued to visit the persons who had testified to so much interest in me. At one of these peaceful gatherings they repeated to me a suggestion of the Duc de Reichstadt which struck me particularly. I had it from a reliable source, and if I were not afraid of damaging the fortune of that person, I would mention her here; but we will content ourselves with the statement that she saw the prince in familiar intercourse every day. Latterly, the odd youth seemed absorbed by one rooted idea; he was entirely distracted during his lessons. Suddenly he struck his forehead impatiently, and let slip these words:—

"'But what do they wish to do with me then? Do they think I have a head like my father's? . . .'

"One must conclude, therefore, that the living rampart which surrounded him had been cleared; that a letter or an indiscreet envelope had been sprung upon him, and for once he had violated the orders which they

prescribed him, of not reading anything without the consent of his teachers."

The poet not being able to see the Duc de Reichstadt privately, at least did not mean to leave Vienna without seeing him in public. He learnt, one day, that the prince was to go that night to the theatre; he took a stall and seated himself opposite the Court box.

His lines will tell better than my prose what effect that appearance made upon him:—

"Bientôt, dans une loge où nul flambeau ne brille,
Arrivent gravement César et sa famille,
De princes, d'archiducs, inépuisable cour,
Comme l'aire d'un aigle ou le nid d'un vautour.
On lisait sur leurs fronts, dans leur morne attitude,
Les ennuis d'un plaisir usé par l'habitude.
Un lustre aux feux mourants, descendu du plafond,
Mêlait sa lueur triste au silence profond;
Seulement, par secousse, à l'angle de la salle,
Résonnait quelquefois la toux impériale.
Alors, un léger bruit réveilla mon esprit;
Dans la loge voisine, une porte s'ouvrit,
Et, dans la profondeur de cette enceinte obscure,
Apparut tout à coup une pâle figure . . .
Éteinte dans ce cadre au milieu d'un fond noir,
Elle était immobile, et l'on aurait cru voir
Un tableau de Rembrandt chargé de teintes sombres,
Où la blancheur des chairs se détache des ombres.
Je sentis dans mes os un étrange frisson;
Dans ma tête siffla le tintement d'un son;
L'œil fixe, le cou roide et la bouche entr'ouverte,
Je ne vis plus qu'un point dans la salle déserte:
Acteurs, peuple, empereur, tout semblait avoir fui;
Et, croyant être seul, je m'écriai: 'C'est lui!'
C'était lui! Tout à coup, la figure isolée
D'un coup d'œil vif et prompt parcourut l'assemblée.
Telle, en éclairs de feu, jette un reflet pareil
Une lame d'acier qu'on agite au soleil.
Puis, comme réprimant un geste involontaire,
Il rendit à ses traits leur habitude austère,
Et s'assit. Cependent, mes regards curieux
Dessinaient à loisir l'être mystérieux:

Voyant cet œil rapide où brille la pensée,
Ce teint blanc de Louise et sa taille élancée,
Ces vifs tressaillements, ces mouvements nerveux,
Ce front saillant et large, orné de blonds cheveux ;
Oui, ce corps, cette tête où la tristesse est peinte,
Du sang qui les forma portent la double empreinte !
Je ne sais toutefois . . . je ne puis sans douleur
Contempler ce visage éclatant de pâleur ;
On dirait que la vie à la mort s'y mélange !
Voyez-vous comme moi cette couleur étrange ?
Quel germe destructeur, sous l'écorce agissant,
A sitôt défloré ce fruit adolescent ?
Assailli, malgré moi, d'un effroi salutaire,
Je n'ose pour moi-même éclaircir ce mystère.
Le noir conseil des cours, au peuple défendu,
Est un profond abîme où nul n'est descendu :
Invisible dépôt, il est, dans chaque empire,
Une énigme, un secret qui jamais ne transpire ;
C'est ce secret d'État que, sur le crucifix,
Les rois, en expirant, révèlent à leurs fils !
Faut-il vous répéter un effroyable doute ?
Écoutez . . . ou plutôt que personne n'écoute !
S'il est vrai qu'à ta cour, malheureux nourrisson,
La moderne Locuste ait transmis sa leçon,
Cette horrible pâleur, sinistre caractère,
Annonce de ton sang le mal héréditaire ;
Et peut-être aujourd'hui, méthodique assassin,
Le cancer politique est déjà dans ton sein !
Mais non ! mon âme, en vain de terreurs obsédée,
Repousse en frissonnant, une infernale idée ;
J'aime mieux accuser l'étude aux longues nuits,
Des souvenirs amers ou de vagues ennuis.
Comme une jeune plante à la tige légère,
Que poussa l'ouragan sur la terre étrangère,
Loin du sol paternel languit et ne produit
Que des fleurs sans parfum et des boutons sans fruit,
Sans doute, l'orphelin que la grande tempête
Emporta vers le Nord dans son berceau de fête,
Aujourd'hui, comprimant de cuisantes douleurs,
Tourne vers l'Occident des yeux chargés de pleurs ! . . ."

The poet had collected as much as he could during his voyage : he had seen the poor Imperial child from afar,

at the back of a box ! He went away predicting, as we see, a precocious and early death.

If we believe M. de Montbel, after the departure of Barthélemy *Napoléon en Égypte* was read by the Imperial family in the presence of the Duc de Reichstadt, who listened to the reading with the profoundest indifference : he merely contented himself with saying that they had done right not to let the author of such a work have access to him.

Was he really so indifferent, so deceitful and ungrateful ?

CHAPTER VI

Journey of the Duc de Reichstadt—M. le Chevalier de Prokesch—Questions concerning the recollections left by *Napoléon en Égypte*—The ambition of the Duc de Reichstadt—The Comtesse Camerata—The prince is appointed lieutenant-colonel—He becomes hoarse when holding a review—He falls ill—Report upon his health by Dr. Malfatti

IN the month of June 1830 the Emperor of Austria left Vienna, as was his custom every year, to visit some of his provinces; this year it was Styria's turn to be honoured with the emperor's tour. His Majesty took with him Marie-Louise and her son, and they arrived at Gratz. There they found Lieutenant-Colonel Prokesch of Osten, who had just been travelling in Greece, Asia Minor, the Holy Land, Egypt and Nubia. He was a distinguished man, both by birth and by personal qualities; he had published several military treatises; among others one on the campaign of 1812 and one on that of 1815. The emperor invited him to dinner, and he was placed at table next to the Duc de Reichstadt. The prince addressed him first.

"I have known you for a long while," he said to him, "and I am very much interested in you."

"How have I managed to deserve such interest on your part, monseigneur?" asked the Chevalier de Prokesch.

"I have read and studied your work on the battle of Waterloo, and I was so pleased with it that I have translated it into French and Italian."

After dinner, the prince addressed numerous questions

about the East to the traveller, about its actual condition and the character of its inhabitants.

"What do they remember of my father in Egypt?" he asked.

"They remember him as a meteor which passed dazzlingly through their country."

"You are talking, monsieur," the duke replied, "of men of superior ideas like Mohamet-Ali, Ibrahim-Pacha; but I am speaking of the people, the Turks and Arabs and Fellahs; I ask you what all those folk think of General Bonaparte? Having had to bear the evil effects of the war, do they not harbour a deep resentment?"

"Yes, doubtless. At first there was unfriendly feeling; but, later, it gave place to other sentiments, and there now only remains a great admiration for the memory of your illustrious father. The hatred which exists between the Turks and the Arabs is so great that, to-day, present evils have totally effaced the memory of the evils they had to endure at another period."

"I am aware of that explanation," said the duke; "but the multitude generally considers a great man after the manner in which it looks at a beautiful picture, without the power to account for what goes to constitute its merit: so the impression he leaves in their memories must be but ephemeral. Only superior minds can appreciate great men and preserve the memory of them."

"You are mistaken in this case, monseigneur: the people are faithful to their religion. Great men are gods who do not permit other divinities, or who discuss them before admitting them. The people judge by their feelings, and not by mental appreciation; and they worship the immortals from enthusiasm."

The Duc de Reichstadt often spoke of the captains of antiquity, preferring Cæsar to Alexander, and Hannibal to Cæsar. The following is the eulogium which, according to the Chevalier de Prokesch, he gave on the conqueror of the Trebia, Trasimena and of Cannes.

"He is the finest military genius of antiquity; the cleverest man in strategy of his age. He has been reproached—by whom? by academic pedants and library strategists,—for not knowing how to take advantage of the success he had obtained; but conceive the difference there existed between Hannibal, chief of an empire, freely disposing of his resources, and the simple general of a jealous republic? of a senate made up of those who envied him, and of narrow minds which, by shameful schemings, refused the means of assuring the triumph of his arms? Hannibal has the merit of having trained Scipio for his victories; and one of the greatest phenomena of ancient times is to see this general, by his genius, make a nation of shopkeepers successful for so long as a military people."

We will not criticise these ideas beyond saying that they are a little stilted, after the classical style. Did the son of the man whose incoherent style strode with giant steps or with lion-like leaps, bursting ever into images, talk thus? M. de Montbel and M. le Chevalier de Prokesch will reply. And then the style of the lines we have just read will explain what follows.

"You have a noble aim before you, monseigneur," said M. de Prokesch to the young duke. "Austria has become your adopted country. . . . (Poor child, he remembered the Cossacks because they had brought him out of France!). Austria has become your adopted country, and with your talents you can prepare yourself to do it immense services in the future!"

"I feel it as you do, monsieur," replied the Duc de Reichstadt. "My ideas must not demean themselves by disturbing France; I do not wish to be an adventurer, I do not particularly wish to serve as the instrument and laughing-stock of Liberal views. It will be a sufficiently noble ambition for me to try some day to walk in the footprints of Prince Eugène de Savoie. But how am I to prepare myself for so great a rôle? How am I to attain

to such a height? I want to find round me men whose talents and experience will facilitate the means, if possible, of providing this honourable career."

Is this in the very least the style you would have supposed the son of the man of the proclamations of Marengo, of the Pyramids and of Austerlitz to have used! True, when we borrow from Reichstadt through M. de Montbel it is translated from Carlism, and when he borrows from M. de Prokesch it is translated from the Austrian.

The revolution of July came and made itself heard throughout the whole world. This time the eyes of a whole party turned towards Napoleon II., and, strange to say, it was M. de Talleyrand who took upon himself to be the organ of that party at Vienna! Needless to say, all proposals were rejected. Then a woman of sturdy courage, of the Napoleon family, both in spirit and in face, tried to arouse in the young prince's mind something of what Ulysses meant to demand from Achilles, lost amongst the daughters of Deidamia. This woman was the Comtesse Camerata, daughter of Élisa Bacciochi. She arrived in Vienna one day, and lodged at the Hôtel du Cygne in the rue de Carinthia.—It was about the beginning of November 1830. One night, when returning to the house of M. d'Obenaus, his tutor, the Duc de Reichstadt found a young woman, wrapped in a Scotch plaid, waiting for him on the staircase landing. When she caught sight of the duc, she moved quickly towards him, took his hand, pressed it and then carried it to her lips with an expression of the liveliest tenderness. The prince stopped, amazed.

"Madame," M. d'Obenaus asked, who accompanied the Duc de Reichstadt, "what are you doing, and what do you want?"

"Who shall prevent me from kissing the hand of the son of my sovereign?"

Then she vanished. A few days later, the duke found a letter in an unknown writing on his table, and opened it.

It was dated 17 November, and contained the following lines :—

" PRINCE,—I write to you for the third time. Tell me if you have received my letters, and whether you mean to act as an Austrian archduke or as a French prince. In the first case, deliver up my letters : by destroying me you will acquire a more lofty position, and this act of devotion will redound to your glory. But if, on the contrary, you take advantage of my advice, if you play the man, you shall see how obstacles will give way before a calm and strong will. You will find a thousand means of speaking to me, which I cannot compass alone. You can only have hope in yourself : do not let the thought of putting confidence in some one else even enter your mind ! You know that if I asked to see you even before a hundred witnesses my request would be refused ; you know that you are dead to all that is French and to your family. In the name of the horrible tortures to which the king of Europe has condemned your father ; in thinking of that anguish of banishment by which they have made him expiate the crime of being too generous towards them, remember that you are his son, that his dying looks were settled on your face ; steep yourself in these horrors, and impose upon them the punishment of seeing you seated on the throne of France ! Take advantage of this chance, prince ! . . . I have perhaps said too much : my fate is in your hands, and I can tell you that if you make use of my letters to destroy me the thought of your cowardice will give me more suffering than anything they may make me endure ! The man who hands you this letter is commissioned also to bring back your reply. If you are honourable you will not refuse me one.

" NAPOLEONE CAMERATA "

This letter frightened the young prince dreadfully : it was an appeal straight, clear and positive. " Are you an Austrian archduke or a French prince ? " That was the question. The duke opened his heart to the Chevalier de Prokesch concerning this incident and the uneasiness it caused him.

" You know very well," he said to him, " that I shall

not take as guide of my conduct, and as guarantors of my future, persons of so exalted a character; but I find myself in a genuinely embarrassing position. It is due to my feelings towards the emperor (when the Duc de Reichstadt talks of *the emperor* he always means the Emperor Francis II.), as also to the dignity of my situation, that I should not hide either my troubles or my doings; it would seem acting wrongly to him to be silent about this circumstance. On the other hand, I do not wish to injure the countess; she is wanting in prudence, but she has a right to my consideration. . . . Besides, she is a woman. Yet my first duty is towards the emperor. Could you not go to the Comte de Dietrichstein for me, and confide to him what has happened, and ask him to settle matters so that the Comtesse Camerata shall not be put to any persecution or any unpleasantness and not be compelled to go away from Vienna?"

After looking carefully into the affair, the Chevalier de Prokesch approved of the prince's resolution, and willingly undertook the mission His Highness had confided to him. Next day he received a note as follows:—

"Since I saw you I have received a fresh letter from the Comtesse Camerata. It was d'Obenaus' valet de chambre who put the first one on my table, which I confided to your care—send it me back; it is expedient and necessary for me to speak of it to Obenaus. I will arrange things so as to avoid all mischief-making and scandal; but I will not reply. Let there be no further question about that. I hope to see you at six o'clock to resume our reading. FRANÇOIS DE REICHSTADT"

Although the Comtesse Camerata had received no reply, she did not look upon herself as beaten. At the risk of what might happen to her, she still remained for three weeks in Vienna, putting herself everywhere in the prince's path: at the theatre, at Prater and at Schönbrünn. But the Duc de Reichstadt showed no signs of knowing her! Tired of this silence, she finally went away to

Prague. The prince's conduct met with its reward: that same month the emperor—the Emperor Francis II. of course—made him a lieutenant-colonel; but, as though fate wished to make him understand that he must be Cæsar or nothing—*Aut Cæsar aut nihil*—at the first words of command he tried to utter his voice became hoarse, and he was obliged to discontinue his duty. A frequent cough followed the hoarseness. The prince fell ill of the disease which was to cause his death.

Let us hear what his own doctor said about it—Dr. Malfatti:—

"I was called in by the Duc de Reichstadt as his regular doctor in the month of May 1830. I succeeded three men of high reputation: the celebrated Frank and Drs. Goëlis and Standenheimer. M. de Herbeck had filled the office of surgeon-in-ordinary to the prince. These doctors had not left any diary of the young duke's health. M. le Comte de Dietrichstein was good enough to supply this deficiency by informing me of many particulars which it was indispensable to know.

"The prince ate very little, and without appetite; his stomach seemed too weak to bear the nourishment which his singularly rapid and even alarming rate of growth required: at the age of seventeen he had attained the height of five feet three inches! He suffered from slight throat ailments from time to time; he was subject to a habitual cough and a daily discharge of mucus. Dr. Standenheimer had already manifested great anxiety about the prince's predisposition towards phthisis of the trachea. I made note of the prescriptions that had been used against these disquieting symptoms.

"I was guided in my early research by the personal knowledge that I possessed of a morbid hereditary disposition in the Napoleon family, and I ascertained the existence of a cutaneous affection (*herpes farinaceum*). I could not approve the use of cold baths and swimming, which the surgeon, M. de Herbeck, had also fought against, probably solely because of the knowledge he had discovered of the weak constitution of the prince's chest. With the object of acting on the cutaneous system, I

made use of muriatic baths and seltzer water mixed with milk. The prince was to go into the army the following autumn; there lay all his hopes and desires: he had obtained the much-solicited leave. I did not commend myself to his good graces, as you may imagine, when I positively opposed this change of living. I disclosed my reasons to his august parents in a memorandum, which I addressed to them on 15 July 1830. I stated that, in his excessive rate of growth, out of proportion to the development of the various organs and the general disposition to weakness, especially of the chest, any additional illness might be extremely dangerous, whether now or in the future, and that, consequently, it was imperative to protect the prince from every possible atmospheric influence, and any effort of voice, to which he would be continually exposed in military service.

"My memorandum was well received by the emperor, and the entrance upon military service was adjourned for six months. By means of assiduous care and artificial methods of diverting the disease, the alarming symptoms visibly subsided. The winter passed by happily, but he still continued to grow.

"In the spring of the year 1831 the prince entered upon his military career. From that moment he threw aside all my advice; I was merely a spectator of an uncontrolled enthusiasm and an unbridled excitement over his new duties. He would henceforth not listen to anything but his passion, which led his feeble body into privations and fatigues absolutely beyond his strength. He looked upon it as a shame and cowardly to complain when under arms. Besides, in his eyes I had committed the grave offence of delaying his military career: he seemed to fear my professional observations might yet stop it. So, although he treated me with extreme kindness in social relations, as a doctor he did not tell me a single word of the truth. It was impossible for me to make him continue the use of sea-water baths and mineral waters which had been very valuable to him during the previous year. He said he hadn't time. Several times I caught him by surprise at the barracks, in a state of extreme fatigue. One day, especially, I found him lying on a sofa, exhausted and worn out. Not able to deny, then, the

painful condition to which I saw he was reduced, he said to me—

"'I am annoyed with my wretched body, which cannot keep up with my mental energies!'

"'It is, indeed, trying,' I replied, 'that your Highness has not the power of changing your body as you change your horses when they are tired. But I entreat you, monseigneur, to take heed that you have an iron spirit in a body of crystal, and that the abuse of your will can only be disastrous to you.'

"His life was then, indeed, like a consuming fire. He scarcely slept for four hours, although, naturally, he needed much sleep; he ate hardly anything; his life was wholly concentrated on tactical manœuvres and all kinds of military exercises. He took no rest, his growing tallness did not stop him; he gradually became thinner, and his complexion became livid in colour. To all my questions he always replied—

"'I am perfectly well!'

"In the month of August he was attacked by a violently feverish catarrh, and the only thing I could get him to do was to keep to his bed and room for one day. We conferred with General Comte Hartmann upon the necessity of putting a stop to a régime that was very dangerous for his frail existence. You will remember the dire period of the invasion of cholera in Vienna, the misfortunes which followed upon the first outbreak of that scourge, the generous conduct of the inhabitants of Vienna, the wise precautions of those in authority, the help and example the emperor and the members of the Imperial family gave, impervious to the fear to which the disease gave rise on its appearance. The Duc de Reichstadt would not be separated from his soldiers or leave their barracks; the emperor could not but appreciate this sentiment, which was but compatible with the duties of a prince; but we had a sacred and urgent duty on our side, to rescue this young man from a position which evidently tended to his destruction. I put to him the imminent dangers he could allay by a speedy change of his way of living and absolute rest; in a situation so critical as his the least attack of the prevailing disease would be fatal. Comte Hartmann undertook to present

this report to the emperor, who sent orders I was to come and repeat it verbally in the presence of the Duc de Reichstadt, at the end of the military review he was to conduct next day at Schmolz, near Vienna. I went punctually at the appointed hour, to the field where the manœuvres were held, where the emperor, wishful to reassure people against their terror of contagion, was mingling with his troops and subjects. When the review was over, I went to His Majesty and repeated my report. The emperor then addressed the young prince—

" ' You have heard what Dr. Malfatti says. You will immediately go to Schönbrünn.'

" The duke bowed respectfully in token of obedience, but, when he stood up again, he flung me an indignant glance.

" ' It is you, then, who have had me put under arrest ? ' he said angrily, and he walked rapidly away."

But he was obliged to obey the emperor's commands all the same, and that was what Dr. Malfatti desired.

CHAPTER VII

The Duc de Reichstadt at Schönbrünn—Progress of his disease—The Archduchess Sophia—The prince's last moments—His death—Effect produced by the news at Paris—Article of the *Constitutionnel* upon this event

THE Duc de Reichstadt's stay at Schönbrünn was favourable to his health. The prince went on horseback daily to the great manœuvres, but with the commander-general; this was the emperor's expedient for saving his grandson from using his voice and tiring his lungs. Once only, when the emperor was present at the review, the duke urged to be allowed to take the command of his battalion and obtained leave to do so.

The hunting season came, and the emperor expressed a desire that his grandson should not be exposed to the fatigue of long chases and to the inclemency of the chilly autumn days; but the Duc de Reichstadt insisted and followed the hounds. At the second he was obliged to return without being present at the "gone away," and the old symptoms again appeared. These were an irritating cough, principally from the trachea and bronchial tubes; weakness, which led to constant desire to sleep; and dyscrasia of the whole cutaneous system. Henceforward Dr. Malfatti advised the prince most carefully to avoid all efforts of any nature, and principally those of the vocal organs. This advice meant a complete breaking off of all the prince's military habits; so he hid his sufferings as much as possible, and had, at least, strength of will enough not to show it if he could not prevent being ill. Several times the duke urged the emperor to let him take

up his military service again, but the emperor always opposed it. Three important men died at Vienna towards the end of the year : Comte de Giulay, Baron de Frémont and Baron de Siegenthal. The young prince, who for some days had pretended to be much better, begged the emperor's leave to follow Baron de Frémont's funeral cortège with the troops. The Emperor yielded, and a fresh indisposition was the result of this condescension. Finally, for the last time—it was at General de Siegenthal's funeral service—the prince appeared with his troops on the place Joseph. The temperature was very cold; in the middle of the commands he was giving to his battalion he lost his voice. When he returned home he felt ill enough to allow the doctor to be called in, and confessed that he had gone out that morning when he was in a high state of feverishness. It was found to be rheumatic, bilious and catarrhal fever, and soon took an acute form; it reached its crisis on the seventh day, after which it passed from the nature of sub-continuous fever to that of intermittent quotidian fever. Dr. Malfatti decreed that, as soon as the season allowed, the prince should go to the waters of Ischl. At last, once more, they succeeded in arresting the fever; but fresh imprudent actions revived the disease.

" It seemed," said the doctor, in despair, " as though this unfortunate young man was possessed of a fatal obsession, which compelled him towards suicide ! "

The spring was still more disastrous to the invalid than the winter had been ; it was impossible to stop him from going out. Overtaken two or three times by rain, he was taken with shivering fits, which led to fever and congestion of the liver.

In the month of April his pulse quickened, shiverings came on and he grew visibly thinner and thinner. Drs. Raiman and Vichrer, who were called in to take the place of Dr. Malfatti, who was ill with gout, were frightened : in concert with the prince's ordinary physician, they

prescribed baths of soup: the wasting away on account of the failure of the digestive powers compelled them to this method, which was to feed the invalid by means of absorption. Again signs of improvement showed themselves, and after a while the duke was well enough for the emperor to allow him, on the advice of the doctors, to take the air on horseback and in a carriage, but only on condition these exercises should be indulged in most moderately. He submitted to these orders for some days; then, having persisted in going out in cold and damp weather, he was tempted by the invigorating air to put his horse to the gallop instead of returning home. That same night, when he should have gone to bed and kept warm, he drove to the Prater in an open carriage. The Prater is situated on an island in the Danube, and is extremely damp; but that did not prevent the prince from staying there until after sunset. This imprudence resulted in such weakness on his return that, when a wheel of his carriage broke and he sprang out on the road, he had not strength enough to hold himself up and fell on his knees. Next day inflammation of the lungs set in, and the prince became deaf with the left ear. The situation was so serious that Dr. Malfatti asked that Drs. Vivenot, Vichrer and Turcken might be called in for consultation. He was charged from the emperor to tell them that, without troubling themselves about political considerations, which until then had restricted the Duc de Reichstadt's journeying to Austria, they might order him a voyage to any country which they might deem suitable to restore his health, except France. They prescribed a journey to Italy and a stay at Naples. The invalid could not believe such a favour had been granted him, and sent Dr. Malfatti to M. de Metternich to make certain from the lips of the minister that no embargo would be put upon his travels.

"Tell the prince," replied M. de Metternich, "that with the exception of France, the gates of which it does not depend on me to open, he can go into whatever country

he likes, the emperor putting the restoration of his grandson's health before all other considerations."

The invalid had cause for fear : soon he grew so weak that there could not even reasonably be any question of travelling for him. They informed the Archduchess Marie-Louise of the state of her son, and told him that the moment for receiving the viaticum had come.

The etiquette of the Court of Vienna decreed that the princes of the Imperial family should take part in this sad ceremony in the presence of the whole Court. No one dared speak of it to the duke, not even Michel Wagner, the palace chaplain, who had been his religious director in his youth, so strict a matter was it at the Court of Vienna. A woman it was who undertook both to warn the invalid, and also to put the news in a form which should hide part of the horrible truth from the prince. This woman was the Archduchess Sophia.

She told the prince that, as she was soon going to communicate, she wished to do so by his bedside, in hope that her prayers to heaven for his cure might be more efficacious when made during the mysterious act of the Eucharist ; and she begged the sick man to take the sacrament at the same time as she did, so that their prayers might go up to heaven together.

The Duc de Reichstadt acceded.

It can be imagined how profound was the meditation and how sad the ceremony. The prince prayed for the safe delivery of the Archduchess Sophia, who was near her accouchement ; she prayed for the cure of the Duc de Reichstadt, who was near his death ! The invalid, who was then at Vienna, desired to be moved to Schönbrünn, and the return of spring having warmed the air the doctor supported the prince's wish. The removal took place without serious accident, and the prince even seemed a little better after it. Unfortunately, one day, in spite of all the entreaties that could be made to prevent him, he wanted to drive to Laxenbourg, two leagues from

Schönbrünn, and in an open carriage. He stayed out an hour, and received the respectful greeting of the officers, talked much, and came back through a violent storm. During the night following this day of imprudent acts he was seized by a feverish attack, accompanied with a burning thirst ; obstinate coughing brought on expectoration, almost a vomiting of blood, and, for the first time, the prince complained of sharp pain in his side.

A fresh consultation was held, and the doctors looked upon the invalid's condition as hopeless.

The Archduchess Marie-Louise arrived. She had passed through Trieste in order to see the emperor, who was there at the time ; she there fell ill herself, and had been obliged to stay for fifteen long days. Still ill, her anxiety, however, overcame her weakness. She continued her journey, and arrived on the evening of 24 June. The prince wished to go to his mother, but at the first attempt at locomotion he realised his strength was inadequate. Nevertheless the joy of seeing his mother once more had a happy effect upon him ; there had been a sensible improvement in the disease for the last three weeks, at any rate there was an arrest of the malady ; the fever lessened, the nights passed over without very great perspirations, and the prince could lie on either side without pain. But the crafty and deceptive course of disease of the lungs is well known, usually fastening upon young and vigorous constitutions who do not want to die ; the disease seems at times, like the invalid himself, to have need of rest and to stop fatigued ; but nearly always this moment of stoppage is made use of by the direful miner to dig a fresh sap, and the subterranean work is revealed suddenly by fresh symptoms, which show that, during the feigned halt, the disease has made cruel progress. The heat had become very great and the fever redoubled its efforts ; the cough became more obstinate than ever ; a second hæmorrhage happened, and the prince threw up blood in quantity.

The population of Vienna took a very lively interest in the fate of this unhappy lad; they stopped any one in the streets whom they knew belonged to his household; from all parts letters arrived pointing out remedies. These innocent empirics at least showed anxious sympathy, though they were deficient in scientific knowledge.

A terrible storm broke out during the night of 27 June; one of those storms which the pride of kings believed to have been let loose by the hand of the Lord because of them; the lightning struck one of the eagles on the palace of Schönbrünn. From this time the people's opinion coincided with that of the doctors, and they gave up hope. As the lightning had struck an eagle, the son of Napoleon was going to die. The prince went out no more; only when the fighting for breath, which was almost continuous, made him think that he would find some relief in the outer air, did they carry him out on the balcony. Soon it was impossible for him to leave his bed; at the least movement of his body he fainted away. Then he began to talk of his approaching death, and to show the distaste he had always had for an existence which had opened out with a vast horizon, whilst fate had forced him to vegetate in a narrow circle. Was it actual disgust with life, or was it a desire to comfort those around him? Only on 21 July did he confess that he was suffering dreadfully, and murmured several times, "O my God! my God! when shall I die?"

His mother entered when one of these outcries was escaping him, and he at once repressed the expression of pain which had spread over his face, received her with a smile and, to her questions about his health, replied that he was doing well, and made plans with her for the journey to the north of Italy. That evening Dr. Malfatti announced that he feared a mortal crisis would take place during the night; Baron de Moll watched in a neighbouring room, unknown to the prince, who had never allowed any one to sit up with him. About one o'clock

in the morning he seemed to be dozing; but at half-past three he sat up suddenly, and, after violent and vain efforts for breath, he exclaimed—

"*Mutter! mutter! ich gehe unter!*" ("Mother! mother! I am dying!")

At this cry the Baron de Moll and the valet de chambre entered and seized him in their arms, trying to quieten him; but he was battling with death.

"*Mutter! mutter!*" he repeated.

Then he fell back. He had not expired, but he was in that twilight state which separates life from death. They hastened to tell the Archduchess Marie-Louise and the Archduke François, in whose arms the Duc de Reichstadt had expressed a desire to die. All the princes came hurriedly; Marie-Louise had not strength to stand, nor even to reach him; she fell on her knees and crawled the few steps between herself and her son. The sick man could not speak any more; but his nearly-closed eyes could still settle on his mother, and he showed her by a look that he recognised her. Five o'clock in the morning struck; he seemed to hear the vibrations of the pendulum, and to count the strokes. Eternity had just sounded for him on the bronze! He soon made a sound of farewell; the priest who was present showed him heaven opening before him and, at eight minutes past five, without a convulsion or a struggle, without even any pain, he gave up his last sigh. He had lived for twenty-one years, four months and two days. His life had been obscure; his death made a less vivid sensation in France than might have been expected. To the French, and in the eyes of the French, the prince was an Austrian.

Our nation is a proud one; not even at the cost of its throne would it have let the Emperor Maximilian, even if he had been the Son of God, give it to his eldest son; it did not at all like such a prince to show no expression of regret, and preferred the man who, to reconquer it, made

almost mad efforts, to the one who lay down quietly in resignation to the decrees of Providence.

By a singular freak of fate the Duc de Reichstadt, as we have already mentioned, died in the same bed that Napoleon, as conqueror, had slept in twice: the first time after Austerlitz, the second after Wagram! The father and son slept their last sleep in it with a space of eleven years between them, and now they slept on the bosom of their common mother—only, the ocean rolled between their two dead bodies.

Perhaps our readers will be curious to know how, after the lapse of twenty-two years, the French press appreciated this event, which contained something both fatal and providential in it, and happened at the moment when a new king was trying to found a new dynasty on the soil of France, a country ever rebellious against dynasties. The news was only known in Paris on 1 August. We will open a newspaper which we had sent for for another purpose, and we there read the article we are about to place before our readers. The paper is the *Constitutionnel*; we do not know by whom the article is written, but it seems a good one.

"PARIS, 1 *August*

"The son of Napoleon is dead. This news, which had been long expected, has produced in Paris a sorrowful but calm sensation. So obscure an end to a life which gave promise of a splendid destiny, a pale, last ray of vast glory, such as that which has just died out, affords a melancholy subject for meditation! The people will mourn deeply and seriously, for it is in the people especially that the memories of Imperial glory have left enduring traces.

"The details of the last moments of Napoleon's son are still wanting to us; his death has been surrounded by mystery, as was his life. We are, however, assured that he saw the approach of death with a fortitude worthy of his father. When he realised that the fatal hour had come, he disposed of the few remaining worldly goods

which he had left, in conformity with the wishes previously expressed by the Emperor of the French, in favour of young Louis-Napoleon, son of the ex-King of Holland, who fought in the ranks of the last defenders of Italian liberty. We understand that a letter written by the illustrious dying man to inform his cousin of the bequest contains evidence of the troubles which poisoned and, no doubt, shortened his existence.

"It must indeed have been a bitter one! Torn away from the cradle, from his country and his family, to be confined in a sumptuous prison; deprived of guidance at the age when his mind had much need of direction; submitted to tyrannical etiquette; a stranger in the midst of a Court, which beset him with doubtful loyalty, to whom could he confide if not in the watchful attendants commissioned to deceive him, perhaps to corrupt him? From whom could he obtain information of what he most wanted to know—of his fate, his future, his duties? His tutors, we are assured, left him for a long time in ignorance of his father's history! If the few friends he had been allowed to meet are to be believed, the young Napoleon had been endowed by nature with an upright mind and a generous heart; barren gifts, which only served to make his loneliness more crushing and death a welcome boon! His life has ended opportunely for the honour of the name he bore: he will not have dragged that great name through a long time of inaction; he will not have dishonoured it in the service of politics, of courts or of party intrigues; he will not have played the ridiculous and odious rôle of a pretender, and history will not have to reproach him with having been a scourge to his country.

"The young Napoleon has, in the hands of Austria, been both an object of terror to herself and a bugbear to the France of the Restoration. His name alone, uttered by M. de Metternich, would have made Louis XVIII. and Charles X. tremble, and been sufficient to repulse every attempt that was contrary to Austrian politics; and yet, prudence would never have let them realise the menace contained in such a name. Such menace would, perhaps, not have been without effect, even after the Revolution of 1830, on the statesmen who have con-

trolled our politics, although it would not have been more serious now than at any other period.

"Austria, therefore, is delivered from her fears, and robbed of the instrument of trouble which she had at her disposal against us.

"Napoleon II. had, in France, at least, a number of partisans, if not exactly a party. It is a heritage factions will dispute over amongst themselves and with the government, a heritage which will remain to those who know best how to rally the popular masses to a sense of the true interests of the country."

The rest of the paper contained a manifesto from the English press, telegraphic despatches about Don Pedro's expedition and an analysis of *Mademoiselle de Liron*—a novel by M. E. J. Deléchuze.

BOOK VI

CHAPTER I

Lucerne—The lion of August 10—M. de Chateaubriand's fowls—Reichenau—A picture by Conder—Letter to M. le duc d'Orléans—A walk in the park of Arenenberg

I HAVE already said that I have no intention of beginning over again my account of my peregrinations through Switzerland. However, I will ask my reader's leave to place before him three small extracts from my *Impressions de Voyage*, which are indispensable to the course of these Memoirs. They were published in 1834, and concern M. de Chateaubriand, Monseigneur le duc d'Orléans and Her Majesty Queen Hortense; they contain my own independent opinions; and some strange light will be shed now and then on the future of the poet. If a statesman had written what I am about to quote, he would have been looked upon as a prophet.

Let us follow the order of my visits to Lucerne, to Reichenau and to Arenenberg, and begin by M. de Chateaubriand.

A tout seigneur, tout honneur.

"M. DE CHATEAUBRIAND'S FOWLS

"The first news I learned on arriving at the *Hôtel du Cheval blanc* was that M. de Chateaubriand was living in Lucerne. It will be recollected that, after the revolution of July, our great poet, who had dedicated his pen to the defence of the fallen dynasty, voluntarily exiled himself, and did not return to Paris until he was recalled to it by

the arrest of the Duchesse de Berry. He lived at the Hôtel de l'Aigle. I soon dressed myself with the intention of going to pay him a call. I did not know him personally: at Paris I had not dared to present myself, but, out of France, at Lucerne, isolated as he was, I thought it might be some pleasure to him to see a compatriot. I therefore boldly presented myself at the Hôtel de l'Aigle. I asked the hôtel waiter for M. de Chateaubriand. He replied that he had just gone out to feed his fowls. I made him repeat it, thinking I had heard wrongly; but he made me the same reply the second time. I left my name, at the same time asking the favour of being received the next day.

"Next morning a letter was handed to me from M. de Chateaubriand, sent the previous evening: it was an invitation to breakfast at ten o'clock; it was nine then, so I had no time to lose. I leapt out of bed and dressed. For a very long time I had wanted to see M. de Chateaubriand; my admiration for him was the religion of my childhood; he was the man whose genius had been the first to stray out of the beaten paths to mark out for our young literature the road it has since followed; he had alone excited more hatred than all the cenacula put together; he was the rock against which the jealous waves, still stirring against us, had beaten in vain for fifty years; he was the file on which the teeth were used which had tried to bite us.

"So, when I put foot on the first step of the staircase, my heart nearly failed me. Entirely unknown, I felt that I should be at least crushed under such immense superiority; for at that time the point of comparison was wanting by which to measure our respective heights, and I had not resource enough to say, as Stromboli might to Monte Rosa, 'I am only a hill, but I contain a volcano!' When I reached the landing I stopped. . . . I believe I should have hesitated less to knock at the door of a conclave. Perhaps at that moment M. de Chateaubriand thought I was keeping him waiting out of politeness, while I dared not go in from feelings of veneration. Finally, I heard the waiter coming up the stairs; I could not stay any longer outside the door, so I knocked. M. de Chateaubriand himself came and opened it; he must have formed

a strange opinion of my manners if he did not attribute my embarrassment to its true cause. I stuttered like a country bumpkin; I did not know whether I ought to go in in front of him or behind. I think that, like M. Parseval before Napoleon, if he had asked me my name, I should not have known what to reply. But he did better than that: he held out his hand to me.

"During breakfast we talked. One after the other he reviewed all the political questions which were being discussed at that period, from the tribune to the club, with the lucidity of a man of genius who went to the bottom of things, and like a man who estimates principles and interests at their right value and has no illusions about anything. I was convinced that M. de Chateaubriand looked upon the party to which he belonged as henceforth lost, believing that the whole future rested in a socialistic Republicanism, and that he remained attached to his cause more because he saw it was unfortunate than because he thought it good. It is thus with all great souls: they must devote themselves to something; when it is not to women, it is to kings; when not to kings, then to God. I could not resist remarking to M. de Chateaubriand that his theories, though Royalist in form, were fundamentally Republican.

"'Does that surprise you?' he said, smiling. 'It surprises me still more! I have progressed without willing it, like a rock rolled along by the torrent; and now, behold! I find I am nearer to you than you are to me! . . . Have you seen the Lion of Lucerne?'

"'Not yet.'

"'Well, let us go and see it. . . . It is the most important monument in the town. You know upon what occasion it was erected?'

"'In memory of 10 August.'

"'That was it.'

"'Is it a beautiful thing?'

"'It is better than that: it is a beautiful idea!'

"'There is but one drawback: the blood shed for the monarchy was bought from a republic, and the dead Swiss Guards were but the strict payment of a bill of exchange.'

"'That is no less remarkable in a time when there were many people who let their bills be protested.'

"As will be seen, we differed in our ideas on that point; that is the misfortune of opinions which are divided into two opposite principles; every time necessity brings them together, they understand one another in theory but they separate over facts.

"We reached the monument, which is situated at some distance from the town, in General Pfyffer's garden. It is a rock cut perpendicularly, with its base bathed by a circular pool; a grotto forty-four feet long by forty-eight feet high has been hollowed out in the rock, and in this grotto a young sculptor from Constance, named Ahrorth, has carved a colossal lion after a plaster model by Thorwaldsen. Pierced through by a spear, with the broken fragment left in the wound, the lion is dying, covering with its body the fleur-de-lis emblazoned shield which it can no longer defend. Above the grotto are the words, '*Helvetiorum fidei ac virtuti*,' and below this inscription the names of the officers and soldiers who perished on 10 August. The officers numbered twenty-six and the soldiers seven hundred and sixty. This monument, moreover, acquired a greater interest from the fresh revolution which had just taken place, and from the renewed fidelity displayed by the Swiss. Yet it was an odd thing! the disabled soldier who watches over the lion spoke much to us of 10 August but did not say a word of 29 July. The more recent of the two catastrophes was that which he had already forgotten. It is quite simple: 1830 had but driven a king away, 1792 had driven out royalty. I pointed out to M. de Chateaubriand the names of those men who had done honour to their signature, and I asked him which names would be inscribed on the gravestone of royalty to balance these popular names if a similar monument were raised in France.

"'Not one!' he replied.

"'Do you really mean that?'

"'Perfectly; the dead do not get themselves killed.'

"The history of the July Revolution lay entirely in those words: 'Nobility is loyalty's true buckler; so long as she has worn it on her arm, she has driven back foreign warfare and smothered civil war; but, from the day when, in anger, she imprudently breaks it, she is defenceless. Louis XI. had slain the great vassals;

Louis XIII. the grand seigneurs and Louis XIV. the aristocrats, so that, when Charles X. called to his aid the d'Armagnacs, the Montmorencys and the Lauzuns, his voice only called up shades and phantoms.'

"'Now,' said M. de Chateaubriand, 'if you have seen all you want to see, we will go and feed my fowls.'

"'By the way, that reminds me of something; when I called yesterday at your hôtel the waiter told me you had gone out to fulfil that country occupation. Does your scheme of retirement go so far as make you a farmer?'

"'Why not? A man whose life has been like mine, driven by caprice, poetry, revolutions and exile over the four quarters of the globe, will be happy, I think, to possess—if not a châlet among the mountains (I do not like the Alps)—a meadow in Normandy or a farm in Brittany. I am decidedly of opinion that this is the vocation for my old age.'

"'Allow me to doubt it. . . . You remember Charles Quint at Saint-Just; you are not one of the emperors who abdicate or one of the kings whom people dethrone: you are one of those princes who die under a canopy and are interred like Charlemagne, with his feet on a shield, his sword by his side, a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand.'

"'Take care! it is so long since I have been flattered, and I am quite capable of letting myself be carried away by it. Come, let us go and give the chickens their food.'

"Upon my honour, I could have fallen on my knees before this man, so simple and yet at the same time so great was he. We went by the bridge of la Cour, which crosses an arm of the lake; after Rapperssweil's bridge, it is the longest covered one in Switzerland. We stopped about two-thirds of the way across, at some distance from a spot covered with reeds. M. de Chateaubriand drew a piece of bread from his pocket which he had put there after breakfast, and began to crumble it in the lake. Soon a dozen water-fowls came out from a kind of isle formed by the reeds, and began hastily to fight over the repast prepared for them by the hand that had written the *Génie du Christianisme*, *les Martyrs* and *Le dernier des Abencerrages*. For a long while, without saying anything, I watched the singular spectacle of this man leaning over

the bridge, his lips curved in smiles, but with sad, grave eyes. Gradually his occupation became mechanical, his face assumed an expression of deep melancholy, his thoughts passed across his broad brow as clouds across a sky; among them were memories of country, family and tender friendships, more gloomy than others. I guessed that this moment was reserved by him wherein to meditate on France, and I respected his meditation as long as it lasted. In the end, he made a movement and heaved a sigh. I went nearer, and he remembered I was there and held out his hand.

"'But if you regret Paris so much,' I said to him, 'why not go back to it? Nothing exiles you from it, and everything calls you back.'

"'What would you have me do?' he replied. 'I was at Cauterets when the July Revolution took place. I returned to Paris: I behold one throne in blood and another in the mud, lawyers drawing up a charter and a king shaking hands with rag-and-bone men. . . . It was sad unto death, especially when, as in my case, one is filled with great traditions of the monarchy. I went away from it all.'

"'From some words you let drop this morning, I believe you recognise popular sovereignty?'

"'Yes, there is no doubt it is good from time to time for royalty to be tempered again at its source, which is election; but, this time, they knocked off a bough of the tree, a link of the chain: it was Henri V. they should have elected and not Louis-Philippe.'

"'You are wishing but a sad wish for the poor child,' I replied. 'Kings of the name of Henri are unlucky in France: Henri I. was poisoned, Henry II. killed in a tournament, Henris III. and IV. were assassinated.'

"'Very well, but, at all events, it is better to die by poison than in exile; it is sooner over and one suffers less!'

"'But shall you not return to France?'

"'If the Duchesse de Berry, after having committed the madness of returning to la Vendée, commits the foolishness of letting herself be captured there, I shall return to Paris to defend her before her judges, if my advice has not prevented her from appearing there.'

" ' If not ? '

' ' If not,' pursued M. de Chateaubriand, crumbling up a second piece of bread, ' I shall continue to feed my birds.' "

Two hours after this conversation, I left Lucerne in a boat rowed by two rowers. Some time afterwards, I was at the Grisons, not far from the little town of Reichenau, whose name awakened in my memory a singular recollection.

During my term in the offices of the Duc d'Orléans I had been for a long time instructed to give tickets to persons desirous of visiting the apartments of the Palais-Royal or of walking in the park at Monceaux. They could see the rooms on Saturdays and walk in the park on Thursdays and Sundays. On the days when the apartments were visited, the duke and duchess and Madame Adélaïde and the rest of the princely family kept themselves to one or two rooms, where they lived in retirement from ten in the morning till four in the evening, and yet it often happened that some inquisitive visitor, whilst the footman was engaged in another direction, would turn a key, half open the door, stretch out his head and plunge into the ducal retreat. The first thing people went to see above everything else was the picture gallery—not that all the pictures were good, far from it, indeed ! but there were several which were the cause of talk at the time ; these were the battle-pictures by Horace Vernet, four masterpieces, marvellous productions, to which I have already referred — the battles of *Montmirail*, *Hanau*, *Jemmapes* and of *Valmy*. There was one point particularly in the *Battle of Montmirail* which attracted attention : in the background, under a grove of trees, hidden in the mist, was a horseman trotting on a white horse. Horse and rider between them were only four inches in breadth by two in height, and yet that little white-and-grey spot had been enough to exclude the picture from the Salon of 1821. The microscopic cavalier

was, as we said when we were specially occupied with Horace Vernet, no other than the Emperor Napoleon.

When they had looked well at these four battle-pictures, for which they had come on purpose to the Palais-Royal, the footman said, "Messieurs et mesdames, will you come this way, please?" They followed him, and he took the inquisitive ones to a little *genre* painting, representing a handsome young man in a blue coat and leather breeches, with his eyes raised to heaven, pointing out, to a dozen children who surrounded him, the word *France* written on a terrestrial globe. This fine youth was the exiled Duc d'Orléans, giving geography and mathematical lessons at the Reichenau College.

I saw that small picture by Couder once again; I was, as I have said, a few miles from Reichenau, and I decided to go and see the room in which the actual King of France had spent one of the most honourable years of his life, earning 5 francs per day. I have often heard it said that, in spite of his sixteen millions from the Civil List, and his Château des Tuileries, perhaps even because of these, he at times would murmur, "O Reichenau! Reichenau! . . ."

I therefore did those few miles—two or three followed the banks of the Rhine, which is slate colour at this spot and yet blue in Germany—and I reached Reichenau. I wrote the following letter the same day to the Duc d'Orléans, which will be found produced in its entirety in my *Impressions de Voyage*:—

"MONSEIGNEUR,—The date of this letter and the place from whence it is sent will readily explain the sentiment to which I am yielding in addressing Your Highness. I am not speaking to the royal hereditary prince of the crown of France, of His Majesty King Louis-Philippe, now reigning, but to the Duc de Chartres, pupil of Henri IV., of the Duc d'Orléans, teacher at Reichenau. I write to Your Highness from the very room in which your exiled father taught arithmetic and geography; or, rather, from that same room, pressed by the post time,

I send to Your Highness the page I have just torn from my album."

"REICHENAU

"The little Grisons village is in no way remarkable except for the strange story with which its name is associated. Towards the end of last century burgomaster Tscharner, from Coire, had set up a school at Reichenau. They were looking out in the canton for a teacher in French, when a young man presented himself to M. Boul, headmaster of the establishment, bearing a letter of recommendation signed by bailie Aloys Toost of Zizers. The young man was French, spoke his mother tongue, English and German, and, besides these three languages, could teach mathematics, physics and geography. The find was too marvellous and too rare for the headmaster of the college to let him escape; besides, the youth was modest in his claims. M. Boul settled with him to come at 1400 francs per annum, so the new professor was immediately installed and entered upon his duties. This young professor was Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, Duc de Chartres, to-day King of France.

"It was, I admit, with emotion intermingled with pride that, in this very place, in the room situated in the middle of the corridor, with its folding door, its flower-painted side doors, its corner chimney-places, its pictures of Louis XV. surrounded with gilt arabesques and its decorated ceiling; it was, I say with keen emotion, that, in this room, where the Duc de Chartres had taught, I gathered information concerning the strange vicissitudes of a royal personage who, not wishing to beg the bread of exile, worthily bought it with his work.

"One single teacher, a colleague of the Duc d'Orléans, and a single scholar, one of his pupils, still lived in 1832, the period at which I visited Reichenau. The teacher was the novel-writer Zschokke, and the scholar was burgomaster Tscharner, son of the man who had founded the school. The worthy bailie Aloys Toost died in 1827, and was buried at Zizers, his native village. Now, there remains nothing more of the college where a future King of France had taught save the schoolroom we have described and the chapel adjoining the corridor with

its reading-desk and altar surmounted by a crucifix painted in fresco. The rest of the buildings have been turned into a kind of villa belonging to Colonel Pastalluzzi, and this memorial, so honourable for every Frenchman that it deserves to rank among our national memorials, threatens to disappear with the generation of old men who are dying out, were there not living a man of artistic feeling, who is noble and great, who will not, we hope, let anything be forgotten which is honourable for himself and for France. That man is yourself, Monseigneur Ferdinand d'Orléans, who, having been our schoolfellow, will also be our king; you who, from the throne which you will one day ascend, will lay one hand on the old monarchy and the other on the young republic; will inherit the galleries which contain pictures of the battles of *Taillebourg*, *Fleurus*, *Bouvines* and of *Aboukir*, of *Agincourt* and of *Marengo*; you who are ignorant that the fleurs-de-lis of Louis XIV. are the lance-heads of Clovis; you who know so well that all the glories of a country are glorious no matter when they saw birth, or what sun made them flourish; you, in fact, who by your royal fillet can bind together a thousand years of memories, and assume the consular dignity of the lictors who will march in front of you!

"So it will be a delight to you, monseigneur, to recall the little lonely port, the voyager beaten by the sea of exile, the sailor driven by the wind of proscription, where your father found a noble shelter against the tempest; it will be worthy of you, monseigneur, to give orders that the hospitable roof shall be again raised for hospitality, and, on the very site where the old building fell in ruins shall be erected a new one, destined to receive every son of exile who shall come, staff of exile in hand, to knock at its doors as your father came, irrespective of his opinions and country; whether he be threatened by the anger of peoples or pursued by the hatred of kings; for, monseigneur, the future, though serene and blue for France, which has accomplished its revolutionary work, is big with storms for the rest of the world! We have sowed the seeds of liberty so broadcast in our excursions through Europe that, on all sides, they spring up like corn in May; so well that it only needs a ray of sunshine

to ripen the most distant harvests. . . . Throw your glance back over the past, monseigneur, and then concentrate it upon the present. Have you ever felt more shaking of thrones, or encountered more discrowned travellers on the highways? You see, indeed, that it will be necessary, some day, to found an asylum, were it but for the sons of kings whose fathers cannot, like yours, be teachers at Reichenau!"

I wish to return from Reichenau by way of Arenenberg. The comparison of a teacher of mathematics King of France with an exiled Queen of Holland pleases the imagination of poets. Besides, indeed, when quite a child, I had heard much ill spoken of Napoleon and much good of Josephine! Now what did I see in Queen Hortense but Josephine's case over again? I persisted, therefore, in seeing Queen Hortense, and any détour, however long, was but nothing compared with that desire. But, since I do not wish these lines to be taken for tardy flattery—I insist on being thought incapable of flattering any one but exiles or dead people—I will write here what I wrote about Queen Hortense in 1832. I copy the following passage from my *Impressions de Voyage*:—

"As the château d'Arenenberg is only a league's distance from Constance, I was seized by a great desire to pay my homage at the feet of fallen majesty and to see what remained of a queen in a woman when fate has torn the crown from her head, the sceptre from her hand and the robes from her shoulders; from that queen, moreover, who was the gracious daughter of Joséphine Beauharnais, sister of Eugène, and the diamond in Napoleon's crown.

"I had heard so much of her in my youth as a beauteous and good fairy, most gracious and charitable, from the daughters to whom she had given a dowry, the mothers whose children she had redeemed, and the prisoners for whom she had obtained pardon, that I worshipped her. Add to this, the remembrance of the romances which my sister sang about the queen, which were so impressed on my heart by memory that even now, although it is

twenty years since I heard these lines and music, I could repeat both without forgetting a word, and I could jot down the music without transposing a note. These romances about a queen are sung by a queen; a combination which can only be seen in the *Thousand and One Nights*, and which has remained in my mind like a glad surprise." [1]

I had no letter of introduction to the Comtesse de Saint-Leu; but I hoped that my name was not entirely unknown to her; I had already written at that time *Henri III.*, *Christine*, *Antony*, *Richard Darlington*, *Charles III.* and *La Tour de Nesle*.

When I reached Arenenberg, it was too early in the morning to present myself to the queen. I left my card with Madame Parquin, reader to the Comtesse de Saint-Leu, and sister of the noted barrister of that name, and I took advantage of a fine storm which had just risen to go for a sail on the lake. On my return, I found an invitation to dinner awaiting me at the hôtel; then a letter from France had found me out there, an act of cleverness which was a great achievement on the part of the Swiss post: it contained the manuscript ode by Victor Hugo on the death of the King of Rome. I went on foot to the queen's residence and read the letter as I went.

All the details of that gracious hospitality which the queen made me accept for three days can be seen in my *Impressions de Voyage*. I merely wish to reproduce here a conversation which revealed an odd profession of faith in the present—if it be borne in mind that the *present* of that time corresponded with September 1832—and a singular forecast of the future.

"A WALK IN THE PARK AT ARENENBERG

"The queen and I took about a hundred steps in silence. I was the first to interrupt it.

"'I believe you have something to tell me, Madame la Comtesse?' I asked.

[1] Do not let it be forgotten that these lines were written under Louis-Philippe, at the time when the Bonapartes were exiled.

" ' True,' she said, looking at me ; ' I wanted to talk to you of Paris. What news was there when you left it ? '

" ' Much bloodshed in the streets, many wounded in the hospitals, too few prisons and too many prisoners.'

" ' You saw the 5th and 6th of June ? '

" ' Yes, madame.'

" ' Pardon, I am perhaps going to be inquisitive ; but, from some words which you said yesterday, I believe you are a Republican.'

" I smiled.

" ' You are not mistaken, madame ; and yet, thanks to the sense and to the colour which the papers representing the party to which I belong and am in sympathy with (though not with all its methods) have given to that word, before accepting the qualification which you give me, I will ask your permission to lay bare my principles before you. To any other woman such a profession would be absurd ; but you, Madame la Comtesse, as queen, must have heard so many serious speeches, and, as woman, so many frivolous ones, that I shall not hesitate to tell you at what point I join myself to Republican Socialism and where I am at variance with revolutionary Republicanism.'

" ' You are not, then, agreed among yourselves ? '

" ' We have the same hopes, madame, but the means by which each one of us wishes to act are different. Some talk of chopping off heads and dividing properties ; these are ignorant and insane. . . . You are surprised that I do not employ a stronger term by which to designate them . . . it is unnecessary : they are neither afraid nor to be feared ; they think themselves strongly in advance and are totally behind the times ; they date from 1793 and we are in 1832. Louis-Philippe's government makes a show of being in great fear of them, and would be much vexed if they did not exist ; for their theories are the quiver from whence they derive their weapons. These are not Republicans, they are believers in a *commonwealth*. Others there are who forget that France is the oldest sister among the nations, who do not remember that her past is rich with traditions, and go searching about among the constitutions of Switzerland

and England and America for that one which shall be most applicable to our country. They are dreamers and Utopians: wrapped up in their cabinet theories, they do not perceive in their imaginary applications that the constitution of a people can only last so long; that it is born but of its geographical situation, that it springs from its nationality and that it is in unison with its customs. The result is that as no two people under heaven have the same geographical position or have identical national characteristics and habits, the more perfect a constitution is, the more individual it is and the less, consequently, is it applicable to another locality than that which gave it birth. These people are not any longer Republicans but *Republicists*. Others there are who think that an opinion only means a light blue silk coat, a large lappelled waistcoat and a flowing tie and pointed hat: they are the parodists and the brayers. These excite riots, but take good care to keep out of them; they erect barricades and leave others to get killed behind them; they compromise their friends and hide themselves thoroughly as though they themselves were the compromised. These are not Republicans, they are *Republiquets*! But there are others, madame, to whom the honour of France is sacred, and not to be touched; to whom a promise is a sacred engagement which they will not suffer to be broken by either king or people; a noble and immense fraternity which extends to every country that is suffering, every nation that is waking up; these have shed their blood in Belgium, Italy and Poland, and returned to be killed or captured at the Cloître Saint-Merry: they, madame, are Puritans and martyrs. A day will come when not only will the captives be released from prisons but when the bodies of the dead will be looked for in order to raise tombstones above them. The only wrong they can be accused of is of having been in advance of their age, and been born thirty years too soon. These, madame, are the true Republicans.'

"'I have no need to ask you,' the queen said to me; 'you belong to that party.'

"'Alas! madame,' I replied, 'I cannot wholly boast of that honour. . . . Certainly, all my sympathies are with them; but, instead of letting myself be carried away

by my feelings, I have appealed to my reason; I want to do for politics what Faust did for science: go down and touch the bottom. I was for a year plunged in the depths of the past; I entered it with instinctive opinion, I left it from reasoned-out conviction. I saw that the revolution of 1830 had brought us a step forward, it is true, but that it had simply led us from the aristocratic monarchy to the bourgeois monarchy, and this bourgeois monarchy was an era which must be exhausted before it could arrive at popular magistracy. Henceforth, madame, without doing anything to bring myself nearer to the government from which I had parted company, I have ceased to be an enemy to it; I watch it tranquilly running its period, and I shall probably see the end of it; I applaud what good it does, I protest against the evil; but, at the same time, without either enthusiasm or hatred. I neither accept nor reject it: I submit; I do not look on this as good fortune, but I believe it to be a necessity.'

"'But to hear you talk, there will be no chance for it to change.'

"'No, Madame . . . not for long years at least.'

"'Suppose, however, the Duc de Reichstadt had not died, and that he had made an attempt.'

"'I believe he would have failed.'

"'True, I forgot that, with your Republican opinions, Napoleon must appear to you a tyrant.'

"'I beg your pardon, madame, I look at it from another point of view. In my opinion Napoleon was one of those men who were elected from the beginning of time, and have received a providential mission from God. One judges such men not according to their own will-power, which has made them act as they did, but according to the degree of divine wisdom which has inspired them; not according to the work they have done, but according to the result it has produced. When this mission is accomplished, God recalls them, and they believe they are dying, but they really go to render their account.'

"'And, according to you, what was the emperor's mission?'

"'One of liberty.'

"'Do you know that others quite different from me will ask you for proof of your statement?'

" ' Even to you will I give it.'

" ' Proceed ! you have no idea how deeply I am interested in all this ! '

" ' When Napoleon, or, rather, Bonaparte, appeared before our fathers, madame, France was emerging from a revolution, not from a Republic. In one of its fits of political fever it was flung so much in advance of other nations that it had disturbed the world's equilibrium. It needed an Alexander to deal with this Bucephalus, an Androcles with this lion ! The 13 Vendémiaire brought them face to face : and the Revolution was beaten. The kings, who should have recognised a brother in the cannon of the rue Saint-Honoré, thought they had an enemy in the dictator of 18 Brumaire ; they mistook the Consul of a Republic in him who was already the head of a monarchy, and, insane as they were, instead of keeping him prisoner in a general peace, they made European war upon him. Then Napoleon rallied round him all the youth, courage and intellect of France, and spread them abroad over the world. A reactionist, as far as we were concerned, wherever he passed among other nations he was in a state of advance, and flung the seeds of revolution broadcast : Italy, Prussia, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Belgium, Russia herself, turn by turn, called their sons to the sacred harvest ; and he, like a tired labourer after his day's work, folded his arms and watched them gathering it in, from the top of his rock at St. Helena. Then it was that he had a revelation of his divine mission, and there dropped from his lips a prophecy of a future Republican Europe.'

" ' Do you believe, then, that, if the Duc de Reichstadt had not died, he would have continued his father's work ? '

" ' In my opinion, madame, men like Napoleon have neither fathers nor sons : they are born like meteors in the twilight of the dawn, and light up the sky from one horizon to the other as they cross it before they are lost in the twilight of the night.'

" ' What you are saying is not consoling to those of his family who preserve some hope.'

" ' It is as I say, madame ; for we have only given him a place in our heavens on condition that he did not leave any heir on the earth.'

" ' But he bequeathed his sword to his son.'

" ' The gift was fatal, madame, and God broke the bequest.'

" ' You terrify me, for his son, in turn, bequeathed it to mine.'

" ' It will be heavy for a simple officer of the Swiss Confederation to bear ! '

" ' Yes, you are right, for the sword is a sceptre.'

" ' Take care lest you go astray, madame ! I am, indeed, afraid that you only live in the deceptive and intoxicating atmosphere which exiles carry away with them ; the times which continue to march for the rest of the world seem to stand still to outlaws : they still see men and things as they left them. Yet men's faces change and so do the aspect of things ; the generation which saw Napoleon pass as he returned from the isle of Elba is dying out daily, madame, and that miraculous march is already more than a memory : it is a historical fact.'

" ' So you think it is hopeless for the Napoleon family to return to France ? '

" ' If I were king, I would recall it to-morrow.'

" ' That is not what I meant.'

" ' Otherwise, there is very little chance.'

" ' What advice would you give to a member of that family who should dream of the resurrection of the glory and power of the Napoleons ? '

" ' I would counsel him to wake up.'

" ' If he persisted in spite of that first advice (which in my opinion is the best), and asked you for a second piece of advice ? "

" ' Then, madame, I would tell him to obtain the cancelling of his exile, to buy a plot of ground in France and to make use of the immense popularity of his name to get himself elected a deputy, to try by his talent to win over the majority of the Chamber, and to use it to depose Louis-Philippe and become elected king in his stead.'

" ' You think,' said the Comtesse de Saint-Leu, with a melancholy smile, ' that all other methods would fail ? '

" ' I am convinced of it.'

" The comtesse sighed. At that moment the breakfast bell rang and we took our way back to the château, pensive and silent. The comtesse did not address a single word

to me as we returned, but, when we reached the door, she stopped, and, looking at me with an indefinable expression of anguish, said—

" ' Oh ! I wish my son were here and could have heard what you have been saying ! ' "

CHAPTER II

News of France—First performance of *Le Fils de l'Émigré*—What *Le Constitutionnel* thought of it—Effect produced by that play on the Parisian population in general and on M. Véron in particular—Death of Walter Scott—*Périnet Leclerc*—*Sic vos non vobis*

AS I have said, I stayed three days at Arenenberg.[1] I had found French newspapers there, which I had missed since my departure from Aix, and I posted myself up in the news of France. M. Jay had replaced M. de Montesquieu at the Academy. Faithful to its traditions, the Academy, having a choice between M. Jay, a mediocre political writer, and M. Thiers, an eminent historian, had chosen M. Jay. The Institute had done pretty much the same thing: M. Lethière, that dear good friend of my father, author of *Brutus condamnant ses fils*, having died, MM. Paul Delaroche, Schnetz and Blondel were put on the lists to succeed him. You would have betted, would you not, dear readers, on Schnetz or on Delaroche? Well, you would have lost: MM. Schnetz and Delaroche each had three votes, and M. Blondel had eighteen.

Mademoiselle Falcon had come out in the rôle of Alice in *Robert le Diable*. A pupil of Nourrit, she had had a splendid success. Poor Cornélie! her success was to be as short as it had been great: two years after her début an accident took away her voice!

Then, political lawsuits had followed, one after another: the Seine Court of Assizes had delivered two death

[1] See Appendix.

sentences, one against a man named Cuny, and the other against one called Lepage. These two sentences had moved the Parisian public profoundly: since the death of Louis XVIII., it had become unaccustomed to capital punishments for political offences. Next had come the less serious sentence against the Saint-Simonians; then, the affair of the man with the red flag. I have tried to paint the effect the appearance of this man produced at the funeral of General Lamarque. He was condemned to *a month's imprisonment*! Solicitor-General Delapalme, who had nearly given up the prosecution, to the great surprise of everybody, only extricated himself by arguing that the accused man was out of his mind. The Republicans interpreted the thing differently, the man with the red flag was looked upon by them as an agent to provoke an insurrection: hence the indulgence of the public government. The last news that I read was less interesting to others, but brought a feeling of remorse to my mind: the performance of *Le Fils de l'Émigré* was announced to come on next at the Porte-Saint-Martin. I did not fail, therefore, to ask at each inn where I stopped, "Have you a French paper?" On arriving at Koenigsfelden, the place where the Emperor Albert was assassinated by Jean de Souabe, his nephew, I renewed the question. "Yes, monsieur," mine host replied; "I have *Le Constitutionnel*."

Le Constitutionnel, it will be recollected, was my old enemy. It had declared war upon me over *Henri III.* and I had replied to its cannonading by *Antony*; it was I who had invented the famous announcement of the discontinuing of subscriptions; so I could not have received news of my natural son through a more evil-inclined channel; but, as I had left it in the hands of Anicet without acknowledging it in any way, and it was a condition *sine qua non*, that I should not be named, I thought the news would be indirect.

I opened *Le Constitutionnel*, then, with quite a steady

hand. Great was my surprise to read at the head of the article—

"THÉÂTRE DE LA PORTE-SAINT-MARTIN

Le Fils de l'Émigré

Drama by MM. ANICET BOURGEOIS and ALEXANDRE DUMAS . . ."

I realised at once that, from the moment my name appeared, the play had been a failure. I was not mistaken. If, however, you wish to see how *Le Constitutionnel* deals with the performance, read the following lines, which will give an idea of the urbanity with which the cricitism was inserted in MM. Jay and Étienne's journal. It is true, the article was not signed. Moreover, as I register my successes with a naïveté which, at times, is looked upon as conceit, I am not sorry to register an out-and-out failure. I have had two such in my life: *Le Fils de l'Émigré* at the Porte-Saint-Martin and *Le Laird de Dumbicky* at the Odéon; but, as I was present at the latter, I will myself undertake to give an account of it when the suitable moment comes. I shall be more polite to myself than is the anonymous critic in the *Constitutionnel*; but I shall not take further trouble about it; my readers may rest perfectly easy on that point.

So I summoned to my aid all the philosophy I possessed, and I read—

"THÉÂTRE DE LA PORTE-SAINT-MARTIN

Le Fils de l'Émigré

Drama by MM. ANICET BOURGEOIS and ALEXANDRE DUMAS

"Le Comte Édouard de Bray, a French émigré, takes refuge in Switzerland; there he has taken service in the Austrian Army, which attempts to invade France from that quarter. The count has chosen his allies badly: beaten with them (since our brave armies do beat their enemies utterly), he takes to his legs and shelters in an armourer's

shop at Brientz. The armourer, Grégoire Humbert, a man of honour and of humanity, takes in the fugitive, whom he desires to save from the pursuit of the Republicans. Humbert is the more zealous and devoted because he knew Comte Édouard: the comte is several months at Brientz, and even leaves Grégoire Humbert under the table after an orgy, Humbert's virtue and sobriety having gone somewhat astray on that day. The worthy armourer has not forgotten this memorable escapade of drunkenness; so he helps Comte Édouard to escape out of the window, whilst the French soldiers' rifles are beating at his door.

"Comte Édouard de Bray thus saved, you would imagine that he would feel the very liveliest gratitude for the brave man who saved him from being shot or hung. Oh! nothing of the kind! Our real, our great drama, it is said, is not so juvenile as to accustom us to such natural and middle-class sentiments; it must, of course, have something quite different—something detestable, ignoble and ridiculous forsooth!

"This is what the Comte de Bray does in conformity with the triple requirements of great drama. Scarcely out of danger, he writes to Grégoire Humbert: 'You think yourself a happy father and husband; you are deceived, Humbert. During the night of the orgy I spent with you, your wife was waiting for you in her bed: I slipped into your place; the son she is to present you with is not yours.'

"If you ask for an explanation of the Comte de Bray's infamy, you will learn that he has sworn implacable hatred to the people, and that he begins to put it into operation upon his benefactor. It is out of such subjects as these that writers have the presumption to make plays nowadays, and drama which is to move and interest people!

"The comte's letter throws Humbert into despair; he takes a dagger and wants to kill his wife. . . . At this moment, the back of the stage reveals the scene of an accouchement, which follows upon the dagger scene; 'I have the honour of announcing to you the birth of the émigré's son.' The priest blesses the newly born infant; mother and child are doing well. This spectacle disarms Humbert, who sheathes his dagger; but he

must kill some one, so, instead of Madame Humbert and her dubious offspring, he means to kill Édouard. Unfortunately, he is too late, Édouard is far away. The armourer does not give up his revenge on that account; he will beget a second son by his wife, a son who shall be his to kill the father of the first son, with the responsibility of whom he is obliged to saddle himself, '*Is pater est quem nuptiæ demonstrant.*' Humbert, certainly, understood revenge as well as anybody possibly could; to beget a child by Madame Humbert solely to avenge himself is the supremest kind of cleverness. These lovely things I have just laid before you form what is nowadays called a *prologue*; it was formerly simply called the first act.

"Twenty years pass over. Humbert died ruined, pursuing Édouard, whom he has never been able to meet with; for twenty years he had been unlucky in his search! Otherwise, his project of vengeance had succeeded to perfection: the second son was born, grew up and, in place of the dead Humbert, Pietro, his faithful servant, teaches the son to handle a sword, in readiness for the moment when Comte Édouard shall be encountered, and when he shall kill him. There is a family of armourers for you, and they could give points on matters of revenge to the ancient Greek families, whose fury our tragic authors have put before us for some time past. Humbert and his faithful Pietro had not found Édouard. I, who had nothing to do with him, found him in Paris, where he was exercising the noble profession of spy: as a count and secret agent of the Superior Police. The drama preserves and maintains to us something of interest and elevation. Besides his pleasures as a spy, Édouard continues to cultivate his hatred against the people: he has seduced a young girl, with whom he has been living for two years; *item*, he has carried away a young man called Georges Burns from his artisan work and made him his secretary; his object is to corrupt Georges, as he has corrupted Thérèse, out of hatred to the people. We could not have believed in such madness, if we had not seen and heard it. But we are not at the end, there is yet another story.

"This Georges Burns is none other than the son of Édouard and of Madame Humbert. Georges changed

his name after his putative father had died bankrupt. Georges is proud and does not wish to resume the name of his supposed father until after he has paid all his debts. Édouard, who does not know the clue to this enigma, looks upon the youth as merely Georges Burns. From this juncture, we enter upon an incredible chaos of ignominy and absurdities; we are at first tempted to laugh at the crude combination of style, incoherence of scenes and pell-mell of persons and to take it for a parody. I frankly thought it was meant as a parody.

"These two clever people, I said, want to make fun of the monstrosities which degrade our theatres, and to avenge good feeling and taste and language by a good satire. . . . As caricature and satire exaggerate the absurdities or the vices of those at whom they want to strike, our satirists have piled up in their parody crudity upon crudity, mountain upon mountain, crime upon crime, filth upon filth, to bring the more shame upon our licentious dramatists. But I have been assured that *Le Fils de l'Émigré* was written seriously as a great drama.

"Then, no longer being able to laugh, I have no resource left but ennui and disgust—an ennui and disgust with which I do not desire to oppress my readers by dragging them step by step through that den of slavery, murder and prostitution: I might just as well invite them to spend a day at Poissy, at the Madelonnettes, at la Conciergerie, the place de Grève or the private cabinet of M. Vidocq, with the executioner's minions; for there is nothing else in this ignoble play. Comte Édouard de Bray, whom you know to be a spy, blunders unpardonably and breaks burglariously into houses.

"Thérèse, the young girl he has carried off, becomes a prostitute very quickly and goes from man to man with wonderful facility. Georges Burns, or, rather, Georges Humbert, steals from his mother 30,000 francs meant for the payment of her husband's debts, and assassinates Thérèse, whom he had lived with after Comte Édouard had done with her.

"To crown these lovely performances, you have a condemnation to the galleys and a sentence of death. Édouard is sent to the galleys for forgery; Burns to the scaffold for murder. In the prison, between the branding

and the guillotine, father and son recognise one another, and Georges learns the secret of his birth. You would think the authors would stop short there, and have some pity on us. Poor folk! who think that people will respect you more than the general opinion, and everything which has hitherto been respected in good and healthy literature! No, you have not had enough of this hideous spectacle: you must see the galley-slave bound to his chains, the condemned with his hands tied behind his back and head shaved, marching to . . . Here the public rose in a body and would not see or hear any more; they turned sick with disgust; the women rose or turned their eyes away to hide the sight of the head about to be cut off; they hooted, they shouted down these shameful doings, and justice was done. Criticism of such plays as these is impossible; one leaves them as quickly as one can, as one kicks aside a repulsive object. What have we come to, when a talented man puts his name to this drama as to a sign-post? It is true that the author has, this time, found his punishment in the very offence itself; his talent seems to be completely dead."

So I was assassinated by *Le Constitutionnel*, exactly on the same spot where the Emperor Albert had been assassinated by his nephew. Unfortunately, I doubt whether that assassination was as valuable to the future as the fine scene one can read in the fifth act of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, which takes place between the murderer of Gessler and the assassin of the emperor.

I returned to Paris towards the beginning of October. All the newspapers had copied the example of *Le Constitutionnel*; they had gone for me tooth and nail, the kill was complete; they did not leave a shred of flesh on my bones. I met Véron, who delivered me a lecture on my immorality which I shall never forget. He had asked me for something for *La Revue de Paris*, of which he was editor; but, after *Le Fils de l'Émigré*, he had no room for my name among the company of decent people. I also came across several theatrical managers who had become short-sighted during my absence and did not recognise

me. I have had these falls two or three times during my life—not reckoning others still awaiting me—I have always risen above them, thank God! and I hope that, if it happens again, God will extend the same grace to me. My private motto is "*J'ayme qui m'ayme*," and I could perfectly well add, "*Je ne hais pas qui me hait*"; but our family motto is "*Deus dedit, Deus dabit*" ("God has given, God will give").

So I gave up the theatre for a time. Besides, I had begun my book on *Gaule et France*, and I wanted to finish it. The execution of this book was a singular thing. I sought learning myself in order to teach others; but I had a great advantage: in going thus by chance through history, it happened to me as it happens to a man who does not know his way and gets lost in a forest; he is lost, it is true, but discovers things unknown, abysses where no man has descended, heights none have scaled.

Gaule et France is a historical book full of mistakes; but it ends by the strangest prophecy which has ever been printed sixteen years beforehand. We will see what it was in due time and place.

Towards the end of September, we heard in France of the death of Walter Scott. That death made a certain impression on me; not that I had the honour of knowing the author of *Ivanhoe* and of *Waverley*, but the reading of Walter Scott, it will be recollected, had a great influence on my early literary life. Beginning by preferring Pigault-Lebrun to Walter Scott, and Voltaire to Shakespeare, a twofold heresy from which my well-loved Lassagne had redeemed me—Lassagne who, since I talked of him to you, has gone where half my friends have gone,—having, I say, preferred Pigault-Lebrun to Walter Scott, I had come to saner views, and, not only had I read all the Scottish author's romances, but I had tried to make two plays out of his works: the first, we know, with Frédéric Soulié; the second by myself. Neither was played, and neither was suited to the stage.

Walter Scott's qualities are not at all dramatic; admirable as a painter of manners, costumes and characters, Walter Scott is completely incapable of painting the passions. With manners and characters one can concoct comedies, but there must be passion to make dramas. Scott's only impassioned romance is *Kenilworth Castle*; so it is the sole one which provided a really successful drama, and yet three-quarters of the success was due to the *dénoûment*, which was put on the stage, and which brutally flung in the eyes of the public the terrible spectacle of Amy Robsart's fall over the precipice. But my work on Scott had not been useless, although it had remained fruitless; one only understands the structure of a man by dissecting dead bodies; so one only understands the genius of an author by analysing it. The analysis of Walter Scott had made me understand the novel from another point of view than that of our country. A similar fidelity to manners, costumes and characters, with more lively dialogue and more natural passions, seemed to me to be what we needed. Such was my conviction, but I was far enough yet from suspecting that I should attempt to do for France what Scott had done for Scotland. I had only then published my historic scenes, *Le Chevalier de Bois-Bourdon*, *Isabel le Bavière* and *Périnet Leclerc*, and, as we shall see, the thing had succeeded badly enough, or was but a very poor success. One has such luck at times.[1]

I published my *Scènes historiques* in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*; so no one read them. In my absence, Anicet Bourgeois and Lockroy conceived the notion of putting these scenes together and composing a drama under the title of *Périnet Leclerc*. It was, indeed, an honour which they paid to these scraps of history, unostentatiously scattered through a review. The play was a great success. Although I had done at least as much of it as of *Le Fils de l'Émigré*, they were most careful not to utter my name. *Le Constitutionnel*, which had torn

from my face, in the first work, the veil of incognito, obliterated it this time with all its strength, and praised the drama highly. Listen: M. Lesur, in his *Annuaire* had said, apropos of *Le Fils de l'Émigré*—

"This play recalls the drunken slave which the Lacedemonians used to point out to their children to disgust them with drunkenness, and it ought to lead the public, if such a thing be possible, to purer and more reasonable ideals in dramatic literature. The object of the authors was to compare the corruption of the nobility with the virtue of the people, and, starting with this view, which is of no value nowadays, there is no vice, immorality or infamy that they have not accumulated in the person of their émigré le Marquis de Bray and of his worthy son; *it is a mass of turpitudes, a sequence of scenes as false as they are ignoble, which it would disgust us to enumerate.* The public permitted M. Dumas's *La Tour de Nesle*, but, this time, it has not been so complaisant: it hooted, hooted outrageously *a monstrous production which made all parts of the theatre, pit, boxes and galleries, turn sick with disgust and avert their eyes with horror.* It is to be hoped that this severe and deserved lesson will impel the author of *Henri III.*, of *Christine* and of *Antony* and *Richard Darlington*, not to prostitute his talent again by putting his hand to such works."

The article, it will be seen, does not mince words (and between ourselves, be it said, dear reader, without reaching Anicet's ears, it seemed to be an execrable thing!) But, take careful notice that it is to me M. Lesur addresses himself, I, who had not been named and whose name was not on the bills; he had taken good care to expose me after a failure, but took equal care to conceal me when it was a question of success.

Here is the proof:—

"THÉÂTRE DE LA PORTE-SAINT-MARTIN (3 Sep. 1832)

"First performance of *Périnet Leclerc*, a prose drama in five acts by MM. ANICET BOURGEOIS and LOCKROY. Frédéric played, scenes, noise, stir and magnificent decorations

and, above all, a situation of the supremest interest in the fifth act, have made this drama a complete success. *It bears witness to literary and historic studies very rare in modern dramatists, and has in general the great advantage over most of the plays of this theatre, particularly* LE FILS DE L'ÉMIGRÉ, *of not revolting the spectator constantly by a jumble of crimes and pictures of debauchery each more horrible than the last.*"

Caught, Monsieur Dumas! But there is something stronger still. Some time after I collected my *Scènes historiques* into two volumes a paper noticed it, and accused me of having literally copied the principal scenes of my fictitious historical book from the fine drama by MM. Anicet Bourgeois and Lockroy!

Ah! my dear good fellow, are you simply ignorant or do you write in bad faith? You would rather not reply? Then let us ask M. Lireux.

CHAPTER III

La Duchesse de Berry returns to Nantes disguised as a peasant woman—The basket of apples—The house Duguigny—Madame in her hiding-place—Simon Deutz—His antecedents—His mission—He enters into treaty with MM. Thiers and Montalivet—He starts for la Vendée

MEANTIME, they learnt in Paris of the arrest of the Duchesse de Berry, at Nantes. It would have needed less news than this to divert the public indignation raised against me on account of the unlucky *Fils de l'Émigré*. We left Madame la duchesse de Berry with M. Berryer in a poor Vendéen cottage, where she lived under the name of M. Charles ; we saw her giving way to the entreaties of the famous barrister, and promising to quit France ; she was to rejoin M. Berryer at noon the same day at a given spot, to return with him to Nantes, to cross through France by coach—thanks to the passport he brought for her—and to return to Italy by the Mont Cenis route. M. Berryer had waited for an hour at the arranged meeting-place, when he received a dispatch from Madame, who told him that too many interests were bound up with hers for her to abandon them. She therefore remained in la Vendée ; only, the taking up of arms, fixed for 24 May, was deferred till the 3rd or 4th of June. We shall not be suspected of any intention of giving the history of the Civil War of 1832. The object of these Memoirs is not to relate official matters, but details which certain advantages of position or of friendship have put us in the way of knowing.

Now, who captured the Duchesse de Berry ? General

Dermoncourt, my old friend. Who was his secretary? The very same Rusconi who has been my secretary for twenty-one years, and who received from the hands of M. de Ménars the famous historical hat that was momentarily deflected from its habitual use by Madame la duchesse de Berry.

We will take up our narrative again at the moment when Madame, driven on all sides by events at Maisdon, at la Caraterie, Chêne, la Pénissière and at Riaillé, resolved to return to Nantes. This plan, which at first seemed foolhardy, was, however, the one which offered most security. When at Nantes, the Duchesse de Berry would find safe shelter; she therefore only had to find a means of getting there without discovery. She cut the knot herself by announcing that she would return to Nantes on foot clad as a peasant and followed only by Mademoiselle Eulalie de Kersabiec. They had scarcely three leagues to walk. M. de Ménars and M. de Bourmont left after them, and entered Nantes undisguised although they were very well known; they crossed the Loire in a boat opposite the meadow des Mauves.[1] At the end of a quarter of an hour's walk, the huge shoes and cotton stockings to which the duchess was unused hurt her feet. She tried, however, to walk on: but, deeming that if she kept to her footwear, she could not continue her journey, she sat down on the bank of a ditch, took off her shoes and stockings, stuffed them into her great pockets and began to walk barefoot. Soon, however, noticing from the peasant women who passed by that the fineness of her skin and the aristocratic whiteness of her legs might betray her, she went to one of the low hills by the roadside and, with some of the dark-coloured earth, she made her legs brown with it and pursued her journey. There were still two good leagues to go. It must, indeed, have been a wonderful subject for philosophic thought for

[1] See, for fuller details, *La Vendée et Madame*, an account written by me from Dermoncourt's notes.

those who accompanied her, this spectacle of the woman who, two years before, had her position as queen mother at the Tuileries and possessed Chambord and Bagatelle, drove out in her carriages with six horses, escorted by bodyguards brilliant in gold and silver; who went to spectacles she had commanded, preceded by runners shaking torches; who filled the hall with her presence alone, and, when she returned to the château and regained her splendid chambers, walked over doubly thick Persian and Turkey carpets for fear the parquetted floor should hurt her childish feet;—to-day, this same woman, still smirched with the powder of battlefields, surrounded by dangers, outlawed, having no escort or courtiers beside one young girl, went to seek a shelter which might, perhaps, close its doors to her, clothed in the dress of a peasant woman, walking barefooted on the sharp sand and angular pebbles of the road. It was a singular thing that, at this date, nearly every country had its kings running barefoot along its highways!

However, the journey was made, and as they came nearer to Nantes all fears disappeared. The duchess was clothed in her costume and the farmers she had passed had not noticed that the little peasant woman running slowly past them was anything but what her clothes indicated: it was much, indeed, to have deceived the inquisitive instincts of country people, who have no rivals, possibly no equals, in this respect, unless it be soldiers.

At last they arrived in sight of Nantes: and Madame put on her shoes and stockings again before entering the town. When crossing the bridge of Pyrmile, she fell into the midst of a detachment of soldiers which was coming off duty under the command of an officer whom she recognised perfectly well, having seen him in former days doing duty at the Château. She reminded MM. de Ménars and Bourmont of this coincidence when they arrived some hours after her.

"I think the officer in command of that detachment on the bridge has recognised me: he looked hard at me," she said; "if it be so, and happy days come to me, his lot will be fortunate, he will be rewarded!"

Opposite the Bouffai, the duchess felt her shoulder touched. She trembled and turned round. The person who had just taken that liberty was a worthy old woman, who, having put her basket of apples on the ground, could not replace it on her head by herself.

"My children," she said to the duchess and Mlle. de Kersabiec, "help me to lift up my basket and I will give you each an apple."

Madame soon took hold of one handle and signed to her companion to take hold of the other, the basket was balanced on the good woman's head, and she went away without giving the promised reward; but the duchess stopped her by the arm—

"Well, mother, where is my apple?" she asked. The apple-seller gave her one, and Madame was eating it with an appetite sharpened by a three leagues' walk, when, lifting her head, her eyes fell on a placard bearing these three words in big letters:—

"ÉTAT DE SIÉGE"

It was the Government notice which put four of the départements of la Vendée outside the pale of common law. The duchess went up to the bill and calmly read it right through, in spite of the entreaties of Mlle. de Kersabiec, who pressed her to gain the house at which she was to be received; but Madame observed that it was too interesting a matter for her not to acquaint herself with it. At last she resumed her journey, and, a few minutes later, she reached the house where she was expected, and where she took off her muddy garments, which were preserved as a memento of the event. Soon, she left this first refuge to go to the ladies Duguigny, at No. 3 rue Haute-du-Château.

The position of the Duguigny's house was pleasant, it looked out over the château gardens and beyond to the Loire and the meadows which bordered it. They had prepared her a room with a secret hiding in it. The room was no more than a third storey attic, the secret place was a nook by the fireplace in a corner: it was reached by the back of the chimney and opened with a spring. It had been used since the first Vendéen Wars to save priests and other outlaws. M. de Ménars lived in this house with the duchess. One would have thought that, after many journeys and fatigues, on finding a quiet, safe retreat she could have taken some rest and returned to her favourite occupation of tapestry and flower-painting, talents in which she excelled; but, after the plans she had meditated carrying out, which had, in some measure, given her more masculine tastes, those futile pursuits were no longer to her liking, and did not suffice for that active spirit.

She resumed a correspondence, which she had dropped for some time, with the Legitimists of France and abroad, the principal object of which correspondence was positively to inform them that in case of an invasive war against France, which then seemed threatening, her son should never put himself in the train of foreigners, and to ask them, if need arose, to unite their efforts to those of all other Frenchmen to repulse them. The papers found in the secret room testified to the aim and to the magnitude of the work she had set herself to do. Her letters amounted to over nine hundred in number; they were nearly all in her own handwriting, with the exception of a few by M. de Ménars. She had twenty-four different ciphers in which to correspond with the various parties in France; she wrote in cipher with remarkable ease.

One of the distractions with which she provided herself, with M. Ménars' assistance, was to paste up the whole of the grey paper which to-day forms the decoration of the attic. During the duchess's stay in Nantes, cholera

made some ravages and daily she saw from her windows soldiers or inhabitants being carried to the cemetery. One night she was seized with colic and vomiting, causing the greatest anxiety to those around her. She herself was alarmed.

"How are my feet and hands?" she said. "When they become cold, rub them, put burning hot bricks to them and send for a doctor and priest." They assured her she should have the services of both, but she would not have them summoned until the more alarming symptoms set in. However, the sickness stopped and the invalid grew better.

Madame took her meals down on the second floor: to her table were admitted M. de Ménars and Mademoiselle Stylite de Kersabiec—who had joined her—the two ladies Duguigny and, lastly, M. Guibourg, who, after his escape from the prison of Nantes, had also found a refuge in the same house, but only three weeks before the duchess's arrest. Very often, the meals were interrupted by false alarms caused by some detachment of troops coming in or going out of the town; then a bell, which communicated with the room from the ground floor, would give the signal for a retreat.

The duchess passed five months in this way. But the activity with which the Chouans were hunted down left them no chance of rallying together; also, the soul and head of the war was no longer with them. The 56th Regiment, which arrived about the end of June, permitted the military authorities to organise a still more energetic chase and a still stricter lookout; the cantonments were reinforced, moving columns ploughed the country in all senses of the meaning; finally, all hope for the partisans of Henri v. of rekindling a serious war soon vanished.

Meantime, the rumour had gone abroad that the duchess was hidden in Nantes; General Dermoncourt was certain of its truth and had given the higher authorities almost

material proofs of the presence of Madame in the town; but, as the fugitive's retreat was only known to a few persons, who were completely devoted to her, whatever credence the civil and military authorities gave to the general's warning, they had small chance of discovering her; besides, the duchess had become the object of extreme watchfulness on the part of her friends, who felt the necessity of isolating her completely in the centre of the town in order to prevent the police agents from getting at her. So she was inaccessible to every one except M. de Bourmont, who exercised his privilege with as much prudence as reserve. It was about this time that the Jew Deutz came to the town.

Hyacinthe-Simon Deutz, was born at Coblenz in January 1802. At the age of eighteen he went to M. Didot as a working printer. A short time later, his brother-in-law, M. Drack, becoming a Catholic, Deutz, being furious at the conversion, threatened him so savagely that Drack warned the police. However, two or three years later, his Judaistic fanaticism softened on this point; he himself showed a desire to embrace the Catholic religion, and, through his brother-in-law, solicited an audience with the Archbishop of Paris. That prelate, thinking his conversion would be quicker and more efficacious at Rome, advised him to go there. Deutz actually made that journey early in 1828; he was recommended in the most pressing manner by M. de Quélen to Cardinal Capellari (afterwards Gregory XIV.), then préfet to the propaganda. Pope Leo XII. gave him into the care of Father Orioli, of the Collége des Cordeliers, for instruction in the Catholic religion. For some time, and on several occasions, Deutz seemed to have changed his resolution. He wrote in 1828, "I have experienced several days of storm; I was even on the point of returning unbaptized to Paris; it was Judaism dying in me; but, thanks to God, my eyes are entirely unsealed and, ere long, I shall have the happiness of becoming a Christian." Finally judged fit to receive

baptism, his godfather was Baron Mortier, first secretary to the Embassy, and his godmother an Italian princess. Thus, by deceiving God, he learned how to betray men. A while after, he was presented to the Pope, who received him with the greatest kindness. A pension of 25 piastres (125 francs) per month had been allowed him since his arrival in Rome from the funds of the propaganda. His brother-in-law Drack, introduced by Baron Mortier to the Duchesse de Berry, had by her been appointed librarian to the Duc de Bordeaux. It was then that the Pope got Deutz entered as a boarder at the Convent des Saints-Apôtres, and he continued publicly to affect the same devotion to religion. Nevertheless, those who lived in intimacy with him had very quickly guessed with what interested motives he had made his abjuration. Most of his early patrons, seeing they were being fooled by him, gradually deserted him ; soon, the only supporter he had left was Cardinal Capellari, who, only seeing him occasionally, still kept up the same interest in him.

In 1830, Deutz, under the pretext of not wishing to live on charity, obtained from Pius VIII., then Pope, 300 piastres with which he set out to start, so he said, a bookshop in New York. After he had lived upon the money made by his books he returned to Europe and reached London in the autumn of 1831. He was recommended to the Jesuits established in England, and introduced himself to Abbé Delaporte, almoner to the Chapel of the Emigrès and French Legitimists, who put him into communication with the Marquis Eugène de Montmorency, then resident in London. Deutz got himself noticed by his extraordinary assiduity in attending the chapel services, praying fervently and frequently communicating ; he thus secured the kindly notice of M. de Montmorency, a very religious man, who invited him to his table and even to some sort of intimacy.

About this time Madame de Bourmont was preparing, with her daughters, to rejoin her husband in Italy. M. de

Bourmont recommended Deutz to her as a wise and reliable man, who might be useful to her on her journey; he was, besides, devoted body and soul to the Legitimist cause and to religion. Deutz went the journey with Madame de Bourmont and behaved himself so well that, on her arrival, she in her turn recommended him warmly to the Duchesse de Berry. When the princess went to Rome, the Pope also spoke to her of Deutz as a man to be relied upon, capable of carrying out intelligently the most important and delicate missions. He notified that she could make use of him with entire confidence when occasion required. Such occasion was not long in offering itself. Just when the duchess was preparing to make her descent upon France, Deutz arrived at Massa and offered his services to Madame; he came from Rome and was going to Portugal to fulfil various missions which the Holy Father had entrusted to him, amongst others, that of taking, on his journey to Genoa, a dozen Jesuits to don Miguel, who had asked for them in order to found a college. Madame received him kindly and, knowing that he would cross Spain to reach Portugal, she accepted his offer with pleasure and willingness, telling him she would take advantage of his kindness and his devotion, and giving him her orders from time to time. So great was her idea of Deutz's delicate sensitiveness at the time, such interest had he roused in her, that she said one day to one of the French people round her—

"I believe poor Deutz is in want of money. I have none at the moment, and he is so sensitive I dare not give him this jewel to sell, which is, I believe, worth 6000 francs. Kindly sell it for me and give him the money without telling him what I am obliged to do to procure it."

So he set off on his mission, passing by way of Catalonia and Madrid. In that city, upon the letter of introduction of a minister plenipotentiary of the Italian States to whom the Pope had sent him, he obtained an introduction to one of the princes of the Royal Family of Spain, from

whom he managed to extract money, although he was abundantly supplied with it by both the Holy Father and the Duchesse de Berry. That little act of fraud, of which he boasted when he returned to Madrid from Portugal, proves that Deutz was already treacherous, and that any means seemed good to him that satisfied his thirst after gold. As he travelled under the auspices of the Court of Rome, he mostly stayed in convents, where he was well received, and got himself noticed for his fervent zeal for the Catholic faith. Upon his arrival in Portugal, although well provided with letters from the Pope, he could not obtain an audience with don Miguel except after great difficulties and several months' stay. It was, I think, in connection with some loan don Miguel wanted to contract at the time in Paris that a banker of that capital, who knew of this project and desired to derive profit out of it for the duchess, wrote or caused to be written, in the current August, to Deutz, then in Portugal, that he would willingly undertake the loan on condition don Miguel would allow the deduction of ten per cent. in favour of the Duchesse de Berry, and, knowing him to be devoted to the cause and interests of the princess, he would let him negotiate the business, hoping he would employ every means his sagacity could think of to bring it about successfully. But it appears Deutz did not succeed in this enterprise. About the month of September 1832, he returned from Portugal to Madrid, and had several interviews with the French Legitimists, whose confidence in the scamp was countenanced by the duchess's example. He, however, committed various indiscretions of conduct in Portugal, which might have inspired them with doubts, but the certain knowledge that Madame had proved his fidelity allayed all uneasiness. Upon his departure for France, he was charged with important dispatches, the contents whereof would have seriously compromised those who had written them and those to whom they were addressed. One of the French Legitimists

who was then in Madrid having declared his intention of accompanying him as courier, Deutz told him it would not be safe for the secretary to the Embassy at Madrid to travel with a Frenchman. This circumstance at first aroused no suspicion; but a part of the letters confided to Deutz, and principally those he had been advised to leave at Bordeaux, to be addressed from there with greater safety to the duchess and other persons, never reaching their destination, it has since been imagined that he gave them up to the Paris police upon his return to France, and that the supposed secretary to the Embassy was none other than an agent who accompanied him and who, no doubt, served him as intermediary to transmit to the police the information he got from the knave.

It appears that, just about this time, they had not put much energy into the discovery of Madame's hiding-place, because they hoped the adventurous princess, seeing the uselessness of her attempts and all her resources being exhausted, would decide to leave French soil and thus rid the Government of a great difficulty; but, when they saw that she persisted in remaining in a country still in a state of fermentation, where her presence was dangerous, they set themselves seriously to find means of seizing her person at no matter what price.

The police, fertile in strategies, thought they could make use of Deutz and of the correspondence he carried to make the duchess fall into a trap and so fall into the hands of the Government agents. Consequently, they made overtures to this traitor; he had been presented at Court; he had seen renegades become illustrious; he was conscious of his strength and the means and power at his disposal; he knew that it was in the salons of ministers that perfidy and State reasons met together; he wished, then, to treat with the Government alone. He therefore obtained an audience with M. de Montalivet, and it was in the cabinet of his Excellency that they settled the price of an infamous piece of treachery.

What passed during that interview, what promises were made, what offers accepted, remains a secret between the minister and Deutz; for I presume Providence does not interfere in these affairs seeing they succeed. Still, they hesitated to make use of the instrument when they had found it, and great was the embarrassment at the château. The Duchesse de Berry, arrested, would become answerable before a Court of Assizes which might very easily condemn her to death; the king, it is true, had his right of pardon; but there are moments when that right is as difficult to exercise as is the right of death. On the other side, to leave the duchess alone was not without its inconvenience; the Chamber was stupid enough to grow tired of civil war as of anything else, and to demand a stop to it; in short, M. de Montalivet was exceedingly embarrassed by his traitor, not knowing what to do and almost in despair at having been so clever.

About this time ministerial changes took place; M. de Montalivet passed on to the civil list, and M. Thiers to the Home Office. The young minister saw in this change of place a means of getting rid of his Judas by sending him elsewhere to ask for his thirty pieces of silver; but Deutz raised difficulties; he had begun the business with the count and wished to conclude it with him; he knew M. de Montalivet, and did not know M. Thiers. Finally, after much parleying, M. de Montalivet persuaded him to accompany him in his carriage to M. Thiers. M. Thiers had too much tact and finesse not to seize upon the occasion to make his appointment less unpopular, and he was too clever not to try by a grand *coup* to get himself forgiven. The capture of the Duchesse de Berry would draw the Chamber to him and the Chamber pretty well meant the nation. M. Thiers would thence become a national hero.

Deutz left for la Vendée, accompanied by Joly, the inspector of police, and arrived there under the name of Hyacinthe de Gonzaque.

CHAPTER IV

M. Maurice Duval is made Préfet of the Loire-Inférieure—The Nantais give him a charivari—Deutz's persistent attempts to see Madame—He obtains a first and then a second audience—Besieging of the maison Duguigny—The hiding-place—The police searches—Discovery of the duchess

SOME days after Deutz's arrival in Nantes, no doubt in order to combine measures with him, M. Maurice Duval was made préfet of the Loire-Inférieure. This unpopular appointment, the callous dismissal of M. de Saint-Aignan and the manner in which he received the news of his replacement, all elated the spirits of the Nantais ; further, M. Maurice Duval's Grenoble reputation preceded him ; one alone of these reasons would have been enough to cost him an ordinary charivari : all these reasons together were worth what, under governments by majorities, may be termed the King of Charivaris.

It was on 19 October that the news spread through Nantes of the dismissal of M. de Saint-Aignan and the appointment of M. Maurice Duval, who was to have arrived the same day but did not do so until the following day, the 20th. Soon the most hostile demonstrations began to be shown. Those who had instruments for making a hurly-burly, such as skillets, rattles, whistles, speaking-trumpets which could be heard a mile off, etc. etc., instinctively laid hands on them ; those who had none ran to borrow them from their friends ; those, finally, who had neither instruments nor friends, used the oddest means of taking part in the great popular concert which was being prepared ; some went through the town in

search of bells, unfastened them from the very cows which chance led in their way; others seized little bells from a founder's and, with a stick, carried at each end by two men, set up a walking tocsin. A general levy of cow-horns was made and more than six hundred persons were provided with this instrument, which, as every one knows, needs no preparatory study. A dealer in whistles, who, apart from this event, would never have got rid of his wares, established himself in the square and sold everything he had on his stall!

Between four and five o'clock, a party of musicians assembled; in order to do greater honour to the préfet, they decided to go in front of him; consequently, they threaded their way along the road by which the majesty must arrive. The authorities, who had seen the general enthusiasm and were afraid of stopping it in its first inception, satisfied themselves by sending a staff officer to M. Maurice Duval to warn him of the reception being prepared for him. M. Maurice Duval, profiting by the warning, sent his carriage alone and entered the town incognito. He thus momentarily paid his inconvenient visitors tit for tat. Nevertheless, the report soon spread abroad that the préfet had arrived at the *Hôtel de France* in the place de la Comédie. The charivariseurs burst into the square, but it was too small to hold them all: the body of musicians alone, like one of those huge tarentula spiders, crammed itself into the square and spread its legs out into all the adjacent streets; it was a racket fit to split the head of a deaf man! Persons whose word could be trusted, who lived two leagues from the town, have since declared upon their honour that they had heard the uproar; it is not surprising: there were probably ten thousand musicians, five thousand more than Nero had, who, as we know, made a great fuss of his music. When the concert was at its height, a man on foot forced himself through the popular flood and made vain efforts to enter the *Hôtel de France*, the doors of which were

shut ; he was compelled to mingle among the charivariseurs and to join in the chorus with them : it was M. Maurice Duval. Next day he took possession of the préfecture. The news of his installation at least assured the musicians that their pains had not been lost upon the object for whom they were intended. Consequently, about five o'clock, the orchestra banded itself together on the place de la Préfecture ; it was larger and noisier than on the previous night ! but, as our French character soon tires of everything, even of a charivari, on the third day a large portion of musicians were missing at the call. The powers then thought they could put an end to the serenade. Between six and seven in the evening, squadrons of gendarmerie and infantry of the line issued out on the square and took possession of the surrounding streets. The performers thought with reason it was time to finish, and retired before the troops, continuing to make a row during their retreat, which bore quite the colour of a victory. Next day, perfect calm was restored, and M. Duval made a speech in which he pleaded that he had been misjudged, saying, among other things, that his works bore witness to his patriotism. Now, as the work upon which he counted the most in order to convert people's minds was the capture of the duchess, he began to contrive measures to prevent her escaping. This leads us naturally to Deutz.

We have said what vigilance surrounded Madame ; she herself had even decided it was necessary to become invisible to her friends when it was not indispensable to receive them : this circumstance nearly brought failure upon the treacherous schemes. Deutz knew very well that the duchess was in Nantes, but the whole city was equally well informed of that. The house she lived in was the important thing to know and this Deutz did not know. He succeeded in getting his arrival known to her ; but the duchess, fearing at first that this was a snare of the police or that some other man than Deutz might

present himself under his name, refused to receive him, at least until he had entrusted his dispatches to a third party. Deutz sent reply that he was going to spend a few days at Paimbeuf, and, on his return, he proposed to do himself the honour, with the hope of being more fortunate, of soliciting Madame afresh for the audience he had asked of her. He did really leave Nantes with his companion, M. Joly, attached to his person as a police constable or guard. Both went to Paimbeuf, one posing as a capitalist anxious to buy land, and the other as a surveyor. The journey lasted upwards of a week or ten days. On his return, Deutz renewed his instances, but without any greater success; he then determined to send to the duchess the important dispatches which he was entrusted to hand to her. On receiving the papers Madame was thoroughly convinced of his identity, and no longer hesitated to receive him. There, on Wednesday, 28 October, at seven in the evening, Deutz was conducted to the house of the ladies Duguigny, where he was introduced without knowing either the street or the place of interview. After an hour and a half's interview he took leave of the duchess, convinced that she left the house the same time as he did and that she had received him at the house of some devoted persons and not at her own. He could not, therefore, either give sufficiently accurate information as to locality, nor swear positively enough in what place they were certain to find the fugitive, for them to risk an attempted arrest which might have no other result than that of putting the duchess on her guard.

Deutz asked for a second interview, pretending that he had been so much agitated in the princess's presence that he had forgotten to communicate things of the highest importance. The duchess and those round her did not think she ought to receive him a second time; not out of distrust of him, but for fear that, being a stranger to Nantes, he might be observed and followed by the police.

They therefore replied that they would send for the dispatches which he had for the duchess, but that she refused to receive him personally. So positively expressed a refusal threw all the agents of the superior and inferior police into a state of alarm. They discovered a nun who had, and deserved, Madame's complete confidence; Deutz, under his guise of piety, easily deceived the good sister and persuaded her that he had really most important matters to communicate to the duchess, which he had forgotten through emotion during his first interview with her. The sister, convinced that the demanded audience must be of great concern to Madame, hastened to entreat her to see him. Meanwhile, Deutz and his companions applauded themselves on their happy idea of making piety and trust the accomplices of their treachery. The good nun returned triumphant, bringing the promise for an audience on 6 November. That errand, made with the best intentions, is said to have since cost her many tears!

Deutz rushed to give notice to the police. Nothing could have been easier than for the duchess to leave Nantes: more than a hundred and fifty of her followers, well known and seriously compromised since the taking up of arms, had left France, and not a single one had been arrested. The duchess knew this very well. She often said, "I can leave when I like!" Her friends urged her to leave France, where her presence could be no longer of service to her cause; to persuade her to do so, they represented to her that the chiefs of her party, who were most deeply complicated on her account, were daily exposed, because, attached to her fortunes by their pledges and feelings of honour, they would not leave their country whilst she herself remained in France and incurred dangers. A safe means was proposed by M. Guibourg; a vessel was found and equipped; finally, the duchess consented to fly; she was to take with her M. de Ménars and Petit-Paul (Mademoiselle Eulalie de

Kersabiec). This decision was taken on 4 November, and the day of departure was fixed for the 14th.

On 6 November, at four in the afternoon, Deutz was brought to the duchess, but clever agents watched all his proceedings and followed his track. Scarcely had he entered the maison Duguigny before he recognised the locality; it was therefore probable that the duchess lived here. When Deutz was admitted to the princess, he rehearsed to her with much skill and in moving tones a story he had concocted upon the important matters he had forgotten concerning her dear Henri and good Louise; he spoke with enthusiasm of his great admiration for Madame's courage and of his devotion to her noble cause. He was interrupted in the expression of his sentiments by the arrival of a letter which the duchess gave to M. de Ménars. It was written in white ink; M. de Ménars wet it with some prepared water which made the characters become readable, and then handed it to the duchess, who read it aloud before Deutz. The writer recommended Madame not to neglect any precaution; and said they knew she would be betrayed by a person in whom she had entire confidence. Turning towards Deutz, Madame then said—

"You hear, Deutz? they tell me I shall be betrayed by some one in whom I have entire confidence. Will that be you?"

"Oh! Madame," replied Deutz, with that aplomb peculiar to great traitors, "Your Royal Highness cannot imagine such infamy on my part! I, who have given many unmistakable proofs of my fidelity! But certainly too many precautions cannot be taken."

The duchess dismissed Deutz, after an hour's interview, showering tokens of confidence and kindness upon him. He soon flew off to the préfet's house. Whilst passing the dining-room, he had glanced through the half-opened door and counted seven places laid at the table; he knew that the Demoiselles Duguigny lived by themselves in the

house: it was therefore evident that the duchess was going to dine there. Deutz told M. Maurice Duval what he had seen, and urged him to hurry so that they might arrive in the middle of dinner, as he was uncertain whether the duchess was stopping in the house.

The préfet, who, since morning, had been planning measures with the military authorities, to whom the state of siege gave ruling power, quickly repaired to Comte d'Erlon, after he had previously entrusted Deutz to the care of a policeman, who was not to leave him whilst they were making sure of the truth of his statement. General Dermoncourt was immediately informed by Comte d'Erlon, and, ten minutes later, all the military preparations were arranged and orders given to the commander of the town, Colonel Simon Lorrière.

Quite a large body of troops was necessary, for two reasons: first, because there might be a revolt among the population; secondly, because they had to surround quite a block of houses. Consequently, nearly twelve hundred men were on foot. They had had orders to be ready since the morning. The two battalions were divided into three columns, commanded by General Dermoncourt, who was accompanied by Comte d'Erlon and the préfet, who directed operations. The first column, headed by the commandant of the fort, went down le Cours, leaving sentinels one by one along the walls of the bishop's garden and the houses contiguous to it, passed along by the château fosses and reached the front of the maison Duguigny, where it deployed. The second and third columns, with General Dermoncourt at their head, crossed the place Saint-Pierre and there divided: one with the general remaining at its head went down the high street, made a turn by the rue des Ursulines and rejoined M. Simon Lorrière's column by the rue Basse-du-Château; the other, after the general left it, went straight down the rue Haute-du-Château and, under the leadership of Colonel Lafeuille of the 56th, and of Commandant Vairés,

joined the two first and united with them opposite the maison Duguigny. Thus the investment was complete.

It was about six o'clock in the evening and a beautiful night. Through the windows of the apartment where the duchess was, she could look out on a calm sky and the rising moon and see, cut out clear against the light, like a dark silhouette, the massive, motionless and silent towers of the ancient château. There are moments when nature seems so gentle and friendly that it is impossible to believe a threatening danger lurks in the midst of such calm! The fears awakened by the letter the duchess had received from Paris vanished before this scene, when, suddenly, M. Guibourg, upon going nearer to the window, saw bayonets glitter as the column led by Colonel Simon Lorrière advanced towards the house. Instantly, he flung himself backwards, crying, "Save yourself, Madame, save yourself!" Madame rushed at once to the staircase and every one followed her. The hiding-place had been tried; it was known that it could only hold a certain number, and those of a certain size, and this order was adopted. It could, at a pinch, hold four persons, during the time of an ordinary visit. When they reached it and opened the door in the chimney, M. de Ménars entered, and was followed by M. Guibourg; there remained Mademoiselle Stylite de Kersabiec, who did not want to go in before Madame. The duchess laughingly said to her—

"By the rules of good strategy, Stylite, when a retreat is being made the commander should remain to the last."

Mademoiselle Stylite then went in and the duchess behind her.

The soldiers opened the street door as that of the hiding-place was shut; they invaded the *rez-de-chaussée*, preceded by inspectors of police from Paris and Nantes, who marched pistols in hand: one of them, in his inexperience of the use of that weapon, fired and wounded his hand. The band spread over the house. The general's

duty was to surround it, and he had done it: the duty of the police was to search it, and he let them do it. M. Joly perfectly recognised the interior from the details Deutz had given him. He found the table, which had not yet been sat down to, with its seven covers laid, although the two Demoiselles Duguigny, Madame Charette and Mademoiselle Céleste de Kersabiec were, apparently, the only inhabitants of the room. He began by quietening the minds of these ladies and, going upstairs like a man accustomed to the house, he went straight to the attic, recognized it, and said in a voice loud enough for the duchess to hear—

"This is the audience chamber."

From that moment, Madame had no longer any doubt that the treachery of which the letter from Paris spoke came from Deutz.[1] That letter lay open upon the table; M. Joly took possession of it and thus gained the proof that Madame was in the house; he had but to find her. Sentinels were posted in every room, whilst soldiers closed all means of egress. The people collected in a crowd and formed a second circle round the soldiers. The whole town had come out into the squares and streets, but not a single royalist sign was shown, only grave curiosity; every person felt the importance of the event about to happen.

Search was begun inside the house, furniture was opened when the keys were discovered, broken into when they were missing. Sappers and masons sounded the floors and walls with great blows from axes and hammers. Architects, taken into every room, declared it was impossible, after comparing the internal construction with

[1] Amongst the men in Paris whom King Louis-Philippe believed to be most devoted to him, persons who kept him informed of all that went on at the Tuileries and in the Government, were friends pledged to the duchess; it would, indeed, be very interesting to mention the names of those who had sent this warning to Madame, if the naming of them were not on my part a denunciation.

the external for them to enclose a hiding-place or, indeed, to discover it if they did ; in one of the rooms they found various articles, such as prints, jewellery, silver, belonging to the ladies Duguigny, which, at that juncture, added to the certainty of the princess's residence in the house. When the architects reached the attic, whether from ignorance or from generosity on their part, they declared that here, less than any other place, there could not be a secret hiding-place. They then passed on to the neighbouring houses, where the search was continued ; after an instant the duchess heard the blows of a hammer being struck at the wall of the room next to her hiding-place ; they were hit with such force that pieces of plaster were loosened and fell on the captives and, for a moment, they were afraid that the whole wall would crash down upon them. Madame also heard the abuse and swearing of the tired soldiers enraged at the fruitlessness of their searchings.

" We shall be cut to pieces," she said, " that will be the end of us, my poor children ! "

Then, addressing her companions, she said—

" It is for my sake you are in this terrible situation ! "

Whilst these things were going on above, the ladies Duguigny had displayed great nerve and, although kept in sight by the soldiers, they had sat down to table, inviting Madame Charette and Mademoiselle Céleste de Kersabiec to do the same. Two other women were even more particularly the objects of surveillance on the part of the police : these were the lady's-maid, Charlotte Moreau, whom Deutz had pointed out as very devoted to the duchess's interests, and the cook, Marie Bossy. The latter was taken to the château and from there to the barracks of the gendarmerie, where, seeing she withstood all threats, they tried bribery : bigger and bigger sums were successively offered her, but she persisted that she did not know where the Duchesse de Berry was. As for Baroness Charette, she was first of all mistaken for

one of the Kersabiec ladies, and taken after the dinner with her supposed sister to the latter's house, which is thirty or forty yards higher up the same street.

Well, after fruitless searchings through half the night, they began to slacken their efforts; they thought the duchess had escaped, and two or three other useless descents attempted in other localities seemed to point to the same conclusion. The préfet, therefore, gave the signal for a retreat, leaving a sufficient number of men to occupy every room in the house, out of precaution, whilst police agents established themselves on the ground floor; the surrounding of the house was continued and the National Guard came to relieve half the troops of the line whilst they took a little rest. This distribution of sentinels left two gendarmes in the attic which contained the hiding-place; the hiders were, therefore, obliged to keep motionless, fatiguing as was the position for four persons crowded into a space three and a half feet long by eighteen inches wide at one end and eight to ten inches at the other. The men experienced one more discomfort still, the place was narrower in the highest part, thus leaving them scarcely room to stand upright, even if they put their heads among the rafters; in addition to this, it was a damp night and the fog filtered in through the slates and on the prisoners; but no one dared complain, as the princess did not do so. The cold was so keen that the gendarmes who were in the room could not stand it; one of them went downstairs and came back with some blocks of peat and, ten minutes later, a magnificent fire was blazing in the fireplace against the door behind which the duchess was concealed. This fire, which was only lit for the benefit of two persons, was soon of advantage to six; and, frozen as they were, the prisoners at first congratulated themselves; but the comfort the fire brought soon changed to insufferable discomfort: the door and the wall of the chimney-place, becoming warm, communicated an ever increasing heat to the little

retreat; soon the wall was so hot they could not bear to touch it, and the door became red-hot at the same time; furthermore, although it was not yet dawn, the work of the searchers began again; iron bars and planks of wood struck the wall of the hiding-place with redoubled blows till it shook; it seemed to the prisoners as though they were knocking down the maison Duguigny and the neighbouring houses. The duchess had then no other chance of hope; if she withstood the flames, she would be crushed beneath the ruins. Still, her courage and cheerfulness never left her through it all, and several times, as she has since told, she could not keep herself from laughing at the free soldierly conversation of the two guardian gendarmes; one of them made a hint that was more than slight upon the effect produced by camp-beds; the duchess made a mental note of this suggestion, and we shall see with what result. But the conversation soon dragged; one of the gendarmes was asleep, in spite of the fearful din they were making close to him in the next houses; for, for the twentieth time, the search was concentrated round their hiding-place. His companion, warmed for the moment, had ceased attending to the fire and the door and wall grew cold again. M. de Ménars had managed to loosen several slates from the roof and the outer air had freshened the internal atmosphere. All fears turned on the demolishers; they hammered on the wall next the prisoners with great blows and against a cupboard near the fireplace; at each blow the plaster was loosened and fell in dust inside; at last, they thought they were lost, but the workman left that part of the house which, from the instinct of destroyers, they had explored very minutely. The prisoners breathed again and the duchess thought she was saved. But that hope did not last long.

The gendarme who kept watch, seeing the noise had definitely stopped and wishing to take advantage of the moment of silence, shook his comrade so that he could

have his turn of sleep. The other had grown cold during his sleep and woke up frozen. He had hardly opened his eyes before he set to work to get himself warm again : consequently, he relit the fire and, as the peat did not burn up fast enough, he used a huge bundle of *Quotidienne* newspapers which had been thrown under the table in the room to light up the fire, which again sparkled in the fireplace. The fire produced by the papers gave out a thick smoke and a more lively heat than the peat had done the first time. Hence arose now a very real danger to the prisoners. The smoke penetrated through the cracks in the chimney-wall, which had been shaken by the hammerings, and the door, which was not yet cold, was soon as red-hot as a forge. The air of the hiding-place became less and less fit to breathe ; those inside were obliged to put their mouths to the cracks between the slates in order to breathe the fresh air in place of the fiery air inside. The duchess suffered the most, for, having been the last to enter, she had to lean against the door. Each of her companions offered repeatedly to change places with her, but she would not consent. Meanwhile, to the danger of being suffocated was added a new one, that of being burned alive. The door, as we have said, was red-hot and the bottom of the ladies' clothing threatened to catch fire. Already, two or three times the fire had caught the duchess's dress and she had put it out with her hands, burning them so that for a long time after she bore the marks of the burns. Every minute the air inside became rarer and the outer air which came through the holes in the roof was too small in quantity to refresh it. The prisoners grew more and more stifled. To remain ten minutes longer in that furnace would be to endanger the duchess's life. Each of them begged her to go out, but she alone did not wish to do so. Great tears of anger rolled down from her eyes and were dried on her eyelids by the hot air. The fire again burnt her dress and again she extinguished it. But the movement she made in getting

up lifted the latch of the door and it opened a little way. Mlle. de Kersabiec at once put out her hand to draw it back into its place and burnt herself very severely. The movement of the door had rolled away the turfs leant against it, and had roused the attention of the gendarme, who was relieving his boredom by reading the *Quotidienne*, and who thought he had built up his pyrotechnic edifice with great firmness. The sound produced by Mlle. de Kersabiec's efforts caused a strange notion to spring into his head : he imagined there were rats in the chimney and, thinking the heat was going to compel them to come out, he awoke his comrade and both put themselves in readiness to give chase to them with their sabres. All this time the heat and smoke were increasing the tortures of the prisoners more and more. The door moved and one of the gendarmes said, " Who is there ? " Mlle. Stylite replied—

" We will give ourselves up : we are going to open the door ; take away the fire."

The two men sprang to the fire which they at once kicked aside. The duchess came out first ; she was obliged to put her feet and hands on the burning hearth ; her companions followed her. It has half-past nine in the morning, and for sixteen hours they had been shut up in the hiding-place without any food.

CHAPTER V

First moments after the arrest—Madame's 13,000 francs—What a gendarme can win by sleeping on a camp-bed and making philosophic reflections thereon—The duchess at the Château de Nantes—She is transferred to Blaye—Judas

MADAME'S first words were to ask for Dermoncourt. One of the gendarmes went downstairs to fetch the general. He quickly came up to the duchess, accompanied by M. Baudot, the deputy to the king's attorney at Nantes, as well as by several officers who were there.

When the general entered, the princess had left the hiding-place and was in the room where she had seen Deutz, which M. Joly had called the *audience chamber*. She was concealed behind a kind of cupboard to avoid being stared at by the inquisitive persons who came up on purpose to look at her. Hardly had Mlle. de Kersabiec uttered the words, "The General!" than Madame came out and rushed so quickly towards Dermoncourt as nearly to fall into his arms.

"General," she said earnestly, "I give myself up to you and trust myself to your sense of honour."

"Madame," he replied, "Your Highness is under the protection of the honour of France."

He conducted her to a chair; her face was pale, her head bare, her hair was as short on her forehead as a man's: she wore a *Neapolitan* dress, simply made and of a brown colour, with holes burned in it near the bottom; and her feet were shod in small list slippers. As she sat down, she remarked to Dermoncourt, pressing his arm vigorously—

"General, I have nothing to reproach myself with; I have fulfilled the duty of a mother to reconquer the heritage of her son."

Her voice was curt and emphatic. Hardly was she seated, before she looked round for the other prisoners and, not seeing M. Guibourg, she sent for him; then, turning to Dermoncourt, she said—

"General, I desire not to be separated from my companions in misfortune."

The general promised it in the name of Comte d'Erlon, hoping that the general-in-chief would respect his promise.

Madame seemed very much agitated and, although pale, was as excited as though she were in a fever. The general brought her a glass of water, with which she moistened her lips; its coolness calmed her a little. Dermoncourt suggested she should drink another glassful: she accepted his offer, but it was not an easy matter to obtain a second glass in that house, as everything was turned upside down. At last they brought one, but the duchess would have had to drink it without sugar if Dermoncourt had not caught sight of M. de Ménars in a corner. Luckily, he bethought him that he was a likely man to carry sugar about with him. He asked him, so sure he was that he would have some and, indeed, after feeling about in his pockets, M. de Ménars found two lumps, which he offered to the general. The duchess melted them in the water, stirring them with a paper-knife, for it would have taken too much time to find a spoon, and it was quite useless to think of trying to do so. When the princess had drunk, she made Dermoncourt sit down by her.

Meantime, Rusconi and the general's aide-de-camp had gone to Comte d'Erlon and M. Maurice Duval to tell them what had happened. M. Maurice Duval arrived first. He entered the room with his hat on his head as though there was not a woman prisoner there who, by her rank and misfortunes, deserved more respect than had ever been paid to himself. He went up to the duchess,

looked at her, whilst he cavalierly put up his hand to his hat and scarcely raising it from his head, he said—

"Ah! Yes it is indeed she!"

Then out he went to give his orders.

"Who is that man?" the princess asked the general.

Her question was natural enough, for the préfet came on the scenes without any of the distinguishing marks of his high administrative position.

"Does Madame not guess?" replied Dermoncourt.

The princess looked at the general with a slight smile.

"Can it be the préfet," she said.

"Madame could not have guessed more correctly had she seen his licence."

"Did the man serve under the Restoration?"

"No, Madame."

"I am glad indeed to hear it, for the sake of the Restoration."

At this moment, M. Maurice Duval re-entered and asked for the duchess's papers. Madame told him to look for them in the hiding-place; they were in a white portfolio which had been left there. The préfet fetched it and brought it to the duchess.

"Monsieur le préfet," she added with dignity, "the matters enclosed in this portfolio are of little importance; but I desire to give them to you myself, so that I can tell you their intended destination." Whereupon she opened it.

"See," she said, "this is my correspondence. . . . This," she added, drawing out a little painted figure, is a *Saint-Clément*, to which I am particularly devoted, and now so more than ever."

"Does Madame know how much money she has?"

"There ought to be in the hiding-place about 30,000 francs, monsieur, of which 12,000 belong to persons of my suite."

As the préfet wanted to verify the sum, one of the two gendarmes brought him a bag, in which were nearly

13,000 francs in gold, one-half in Spanish money, which, in the confusion, he had taken the precaution of putting on one side.

"How did the bag get into your hands?" the préfet asked the gendarme.

"Madame gave it to me, saying it was for me."

"What! Madame gave it you and said it was for you?"

"Yes."

"How did she come to make you such a present?"

"She asked which of the two gendarmes had slept on the camp-bed from midnight to four in the morning. I said it was I: then she turned to my companion and asked if it was so? and he replied that it was. Then she held out the bag to me and told me to take it."

"It was a joke," said the préfet.

"I think so too," said the poor gendarme, casting a last glance on the heap of gold; "so you see I brought it to you."

The préfet put the 13,000 francs to the other 17,000 and took it all away to the préfecture.

When, a year later, I wrote *La Vendée et Madame*, and the Duchesse de Berry heard that the 13,000 francs had been taken from her protégé, she wrote to the general to inform him that, by the same post, she was writing to the Government to call upon it to render up the 13,000 francs to its rightful owner. The gendarme was then at Limoges. They sent him the 13,000 francs, but they expelled him from the army.

Hardly was the visit about the money and the papers over before the Comte d'Erlon arrived, and he exercised towards Madame all that courteousness of a man of the world which the préfet had thought it unnecessary to employ. The duchess leant towards the general—

"You have promised not to leave me," she said to him in a whisper.

"I will keep my word to Your Highness," replied the general.

The duchess then rose quickly and went up to the Comte d'Erlon, saying—

" Monsieur le Comte, I have given myself up to General Dermoncourt ; I pray you to allow him to remain with me. I have also asked him not to let me be separated from my unfortunate companions, and he also promised me that ; will you respect his promises ? "

" The general has promised nothing that I am not ready to grant, Madame ; and you will ask nothing of me which it is in my power to grant that I will not concede with all possible haste."

The duchess was reassured by these words and, seeing that Comte d'Erlon was talking apart with the general in low tones, she drew aside from them and discreetly talked to M. de Ménars and to Mlle. de Kersabiec. Comte d'Erlon then observed to the general that M. de Ménars and Mlle. de Kersabiec might stay with the Duchesse de Berry ; but that he was under the conviction that M. Guibourg would be claimed by the judicial authorities to be replaced in the position he occupied before his escape, as a criminal trial was started against him. He thought the duchess ought to be taken to the château as soon as possible ; he had even given all the necessary orders for that removal before he came to the duchess. Dermoncourt then returned to Madame and asked her if she felt better.

" Better ? Why do you ask me that ? "

" Because, if Madame can walk or is not afraid of driving, it is urgent we should leave the house at once."

" Leave the house ? Where are we to go ? " she asked, looking sharply at the general : " Where are you going to take me ? "

" To the château, Madame."

" Oh yes ! and from there to Blaye, no doubt ! "

Mlle. de Kersabiec went up to the general, and said—

" General, Her Royal Highness cannot go on foot, it is not suitable."

" Mademoiselle," replied Dermoncourt, " allow me to differ from you. If there are any insults to encounter, which I doubt, a carriage will not protect Madame from such insult ; but I will answer for it that my arm will at least be a safe shield against anything of the sort."

Then, turning to the duchess—

" Believe me, Madame, let us walk. As the distance is short, you need only put a hat on your head and fling a cloak round your shoulders and all will be right."

Then Rusconi rushed downstairs and brought up three hats, which probably belonged to the ladies Duguigny. Amongst them was a black one. Dermoncourt suggested that the duchess should wear that.

" Yes," she said, " it would be more fitting under the circumstances."

She then took the general's arm and, addressing her companions, she said—

" Come, friends, let us go ! "

As she passed through the attic, she threw a last look at it and at the door in the chimney-place which was still open.

" Oh ! general," she said, laughingly, " if you had not made war against me after the fashion used against St. Laurence—which, by the way, is unworthy of military generosity — you would not have me upon your arm now."

When they left the house, M. Guibourg headed the procession with a legal magistrate and another public functionary ; then came Mlle. de Kersabiec with the préfet and Comte d'Erlon ; General Dermoncourt followed them immediately with the duchess and M. de Ménars, and behind them came several staff officers. When they reached the street the préfet suggested that the colonel of the National Guard should offer his arm to the duchess. She consented quite graciously. The troops of the line and National Guards formed a hedge from the house of the Demoiselles Duguigny as far as the château, and,

behind them, as much as space permitted, in lines ten times thicker than that of the soldiers, the population crowded round. Among the men watching the duchess pass by were some with eyes blazing with hatred from old memories; so muffled murmurs rolled along the route and soon even shouts rent the air, but General Dermoncourt stopped and, flashing his dark eyes around, growled rather than spoke the words—

"Come now, where is the respect due to prisoners, specially when they are women?"

They were silent. All the same it was a good thing there was only sixty yards between the house of the ladies Duguigny and the château, and, indeed, that distance would have been too long without the respectful attentions with which the generals had surrounded the duchess. Their deference commanded the silence of the multitude that had been buffeted about by the civil war which for six months had been muttering round the vicinity of Nantes, ruining its trade and mowing down its inhabitants. Finally, the château was reached, the drawbridge crossed and the gate shut upon the procession. Madame had shown no sign of fear during the journey beyond pressing the general's arm more tightly. After crossing the court of the château, they went up the stairs, but the duchess was so weak from all the emotion she had just gone through that Dermoncourt felt her bend over and press his arm with all her weight. At last she reached the room intended for her, which the colonel of artillery, the governor of the castle, hastened to offer her. There, feeling better, she told the general she could eat something. As a matter of fact, having been disturbed just as she was going to sit down to the table, she had not eaten anything for nearly thirty hours. As no orders had been given for breakfast, and it would have kept her too long till it was prepared, the colonel suggested to Madame a glass of frontignan and some biscuits, which she accepted. But Madame ate very little then on account of a tertian fever

which had attacked her regularly during the last two or three weeks. Breakfast was not ready for three-quarters of an hour; when it was announced, General Dermoncourt offered his arm to the duchess to take her to the dining-room. As she sat at the table, she turned smilingly to her cavalier.

"General," she said, "if I were not afraid it would be said that I was trying to beguile you I would suggest you should share my repast."

"And I, Madame," replied the general, "if I dared, would willingly accept, for I have not had anything since eleven yesterday morning."

"Oh, oh! general," said the duchess laughing, "then we are quits."

The préfet came in whilst they were at table. He, too, was as hungry as Madame and Dermoncourt, but the duchess took good care not to invite M. Maurice Duval to sit down with her. The préfet soon went away straight to a sideboard where they had just brought the partridges cleared away from the duchess's table, called for a knife and fork and began to eat, turning his back on the princess. Madame looked at him, then turned her eyes to the general—

"General," she said, "do you know what I regret most in my present situation?"

"No, Madame."

"Two sheriffs to call that gentleman to account."

When breakfast was finished, the duchess returned to the salon. There, General Dermoncourt asked her permission to leave her. General d'Erlon was holding a review of the National Guard and of the troops of the line in which he was obliged to take part.

"When shall I see you again?" asked the princess.

"As soon as the review is over, Madame," replied the general, "and I presume it will not be long."

Scarcely had Dermoncourt got thirty yards outside the château, before a trumpeter of the gendarmerie caught

him up, out of breath, saying that the duchess was asking for him instantly. He added that she seemed furious with the general. Interrogated as to the cause of this anger, the soldier replied that after some words addressed by Madame to Mlle. de Kersabiec, he attributed it to M. de Ménars having been sent to another building instead of being placed in her anteroom. Fearing, indeed, that they had not treated M. de Ménars with the respect he had ordered, the general returned at once and went to him, finding him so unwell that he had flung himself on his bed without the strength to undress himself. The general offered to be his valet, but as there were neither tables nor chairs in his room and he could not stand it was not an easy office to perform ; the general therefore called a gendarme to his assistance and, between them, they managed to put M. de Ménars to bed. When he was in bed, the general told him that the duchess had had him called back and that he would, no doubt, have a scene with Madame over his separation from her. M. de Ménars then charged Dermoncourt to reassure Madame about his condition and to tell her that he only felt a passing faintness and that he was well satisfied with his quarters. The general immediately repaired to the duchess, who, when she saw him, leapt rather than walked to him.

" Ah ! monsieur," she exclaimed, in a voice trembling with anger, " so this is how you have begun—this is how you keep your promises—it augurs well for the future. It is indeed horrible ! "

" What is the matter, Madame ? " asked the general.

" You promised me I should not be separated from any of my companions, and at the very outset you put Ménars in another part of the building from mine."

" Madame is mistaken," replied Dermoncourt. " M. de Ménars, it is true, is in another part of the castle, but the tower Madame occupies leads to his rooms."

" Yes, only one has to go downstairs and up again by another staircase."

" Madame is again mistaken," replied the general. " You can get to M. de Ménars by going down to the first floor and along by the apartments."

" If that is so, let us go, monsieur, and see poor Ménars at once," said the duchess.

Whereupon, she took the general's arm and drew him towards the door.

" Has Madame forgotten that she is a prisoner ? " he asked her.

" Ah! true," murmured the duchess ; " I thought I was still in a castle, and I am in a prison. At least, general, I hope it will not be forbidden me to send and inquire how he is ? "

" I wished to bring you news myself," said the general, " I have come from him."

" Well, how is he ? "

The general then told the duchess the care he had taken of M. de Ménars. Such marks of attention, she well understood, had been paid more to her than to M. de Ménars, and they touched her keenly.

" General," she said, in tones which showed that her anger had evaporated, " I thank you for all your kindness to Ménars ; but he indeed thoroughly deserves it, for he is not an adherent of my train."

It was too late to go to the review, so the general remained with Madame, who expressed a desire to write to her brother, the King of Naples and to her sister, the Queen of Spain.

" I have only to acquaint them with my ill luck," she said. " I am afraid they will be uneasy concerning my health and false rumours may reach them because of the distance that separates us from one another. By the way," she added, " what do you think of the political conduct of my sister, the Queen of Spain ? "

" Why, Madame," Dermoncourt replied, " I think she is following the right course."

" So much the better, general," she went on, sighing,

" provided she attains to good in the end! Louis XVI. began as she began."

The duchess then noticed that Dermoncourt had a black scarf in which at times he put his arm.

" How is your arm going on, general ? " she asked.

" Very well ; but how did Madame know about it ! "

" Ah ! I heard at Nantes ; they told me it was one of my horses which threw you. I said, ' Oh ! it was a good act on the horse's part,' for I confess I was not sorry for the accident : you have done us much harm ! I hope, however, it was not very serious."

" You see, Madame," replied Dermoncourt, " your wish was granted in advance. I am almost cured."

" Tell me, General," asked the duchess, " shall I be allowed to see the newspapers ? "

" I do not see any objections. Will Madame tell me those she would like ? "

" Well, *l'Echo* first, then *La Quotidienne*, and lastly, *Le Constitutionnel*."

" *Le Constitutionnel* for you, Madame ? "

" Why not ? "

" Will you be prepared to abjure your politics as Henri IV. did his religion and to say : ' Paris indeed deserves a *charter* ? ' "

" Do you think that reading the venerable *Constitutionnel* can convert me ? "

" Certainly ! It is a paper packed with arguments and eloquent with conviction ! . . ."

" Never mind, I will venture : I should also like *Le Courrier français*."

" *Le Courrier !* but Madame forgets it has become ultra-Liberal."

" Listen, general : I like everything that is broad and loyal ; I also want *l'Ami de la Charte*."

" Come now, that is Jacobin ! "

" I want it from another motive, general," she said to Dermoncourt, in a melancholy tone ; " it always calls

me Caroline, curtly, and that was what I was called as a young girl; now I regret my girlhood's name, for that of my wifehood has not brought me happiness."

There was a moment's silence, then the duchess asked Dermoncourt if he knew her before the events of July.

"No, Madame," he replied.

"But did you, then, never come to Paris?"

"Pardon, Madame," replied Dermoncourt; "I was there twice during the Restoration."

"What! general, you came twice to Paris and never saw me?"

"For a good reason," Demoncourt replied.

"Tell me what it was."

"When I saw Madame coming from one direction I took myself off in another as quickly as possible."

"It was not very gallant of you, monsieur; why did you act like that?"

"Why, Madame? I beg you to forgive my frankness, which is, I admit, somewhat *blunt*; but it was because I did not like the Restoration. It can be imagined after this, Madame, that if I have been fortunate enough to do something to give you pleasure, at all events, I have done so without any ulterior motive, and all the more as Your Highness is not in a position to be able to offer me any reward."

The duchess smiled; then, turning towards Mademoiselle de Kersabiec, she said—

"Isn't he a good fellow, Stylite?"

"Yes, Madame; it is a pity he is not on our side."

Whereupon, Dermoncourt hastened to reply—

"All that Madame has the right to demand in the way of respect, attention, consideration and care in the overpowering position in which she finds herself placed, she will obtain from me; all the services she can ask and I can grant her, I will; but nothing in the world is capable of making me forget my duty."

Then, turning to Mlle. de Kersabiec—

"You have heard what I say, Mlle. Stylite," said he, "I hope that, whilst I have the honour of being with Madame, you will be so good as never to return to this subject."

"You hear him, Stylite," said Madame—"let us talk of something else."

Then, in a different intonation of voice, she said—

"Have you seen my son, general?"

"I have never had that honour."

"Ah! He is a good lad, very quick, very heedless, but French through and through, like myself."

"You love him greatly?"

"As much as a mother can love her son."

"Well, will Madame permit me to say that I do not understand how, since all is at an end in la Vendée—as, after the battles of Chêne and of la Pénissière, all hope was lost—she did not think of returning to the side of the son she loves so much: we have beaten her, however."

"General, it was you who seized my correspondence, I think?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Have you read my letters?"

"I have committed that indiscretion."

"Well, then, you must have seen that, directly I put myself at the head of my brave Vendéens, I resolved to submit to all the consequences of insurrection. . . . Why! it was for me they rose up and risked their heads, and should I have deserted them? . . . No, general, their fate shall be mine and I have kept my promise to them. But I should have been your prisoner a long time before; I should have put an end to it all by giving myself up, if one fear had not pursued me."

"Which was?"

"I was well aware that, directly after I was made a prisoner, I should be claimed by Spain, Prussia and Russia. The French Government, on its side, would wish to try me, naturally enough; but, as the Holy Alliance would not permit me to appear before a Court

of Assizes—for the dignity of all the crowned heads of Europe is concerned in it—there is but one step from this conflict of interests to a coolness, and from a coolness to war; and, as I have already told you, I do not wish to be the excuse for an invasive war. *All for France and by France* was the motto I adopted and from which I do not wish to depart. Besides, who could satisfy me that, were France invaded, it would not be divided? I desire it to remain whole!"

Dermoncourt smiled.

"Why do you laugh?" she said to him.

He bowed without replying.

"Come, I want to know why you are laughing?"

"I am laughing at Your Highness's fears of a foreign war. . . ."

"And at my small fear of a civil war, also?"

"I beg Madame to remark that she completes my thought and not my sentence."

"Oh! that cannot wound me, general; for, since I came into France, I have been mistaken about the disposition of people's minds; I thought that France would rise; that the army would pass over to my side; *the more so in that I was invited to return to France more by my enemies than by my friends.* Then, too, I dreamed of a sort of return from the Isle of Elba. After the battles of Maisdon, of la Caraterie, of Chêne, of la Pénissière and of Riaillé, I gave positive orders to all my Vendéens to return home; for I am French before all other considerations, general, and, to prove this, at this present moment, when I find myself once again among these excellent French faces, I cannot believe myself to be in prison. All my fear is lest I am sent elsewhere; they are certain not to leave me here; I am too near the seat of insurrection. They have, indeed, talked of transferring me to Saumur; but that is still a riotous town. As a matter of fact, general, they are in a more embarrassing position than I am myself!"

As she spoke the last words, she rose and walked about with her hands behind her back like a man. After a second, she stopped short and went on—

"If I am in prison, I hope, at least, that I am not in solitary confinement and that M. Guibourg may dine with me?"

"I do not see any objection, Madame, the more so as I think it is the last time he will have that honour."

Whether she did not hear these words, or paid no heed to them, the duchess did not reply to Dermoncourt; and, as it was night, and the dinner-hour was approaching, he asked the princess's leave to withdraw, and obtained his orders for the next day at the same time. At ten o'clock next day, the artillery colonel in command of the château came to Dermoncourt's rooms; he came to announce a fresh burst of anger from the duchess. She had almost as much cause for it as on the previous day. M. Guibourg —as the Comte d'Erlon had warned the duchess—had been put back into prison during the night; so, when the duchess asked why he did not come to breakfast, they told her the news, for which a sentence dropped by Dermoncourt the previous day would have prepared her if she had listened to it. The duchess had cried out against the treachery and had called the general a *Jesuit.* That insult was so odd from Madame's lips that Dermoncourt was still laughing at it when he came to her. She received him with the same petulance as on the previous day and almost with the same words.

"Ah! So this is how things are going, monsieur? I should never have believed it; you have deceived me shamefully!"

The general feigned astonishment as before, and asked her what was the matter.

"Guibourg has been carried off in the night and taken to prison in spite of the promise you made me that I should not be separated from my *companions in misfortune.*"

"I should desire to fulfil all Madame's wishes, but it

does not depend upon either me or Comte d'Erlon to prevent the law from claiming M. Guibourg. He had been summoned before his arrest: the Court of Assizes at Loir-et-Cher was served with the writ, and M. Guibourg was to be transferred to Blois to be tried there. No legal power could get him off. As regards Mlle. de Kersabiec and M. de Ménars, who are not under prosecution, they remain with Your Royal Highness; thus you see, Madame, that Comte d'Erlon and I have not failed to keep the promise we gave you."

"But, at any rate, why was I not warned?"

"Here again, Madame, I have nothing to reproach myself with, since, when allowing M. Guibourg to dine with you yesterday, I added the words—'*All the more as it will probably be the last meal he will have the honour of taking with Madame.*'"

"I never heard that."

"The general said it though, Madame," gently interrupted Mlle. de Kersabiec."

"But why not, explain more clearly?"

"Because," replied Dermoncourt, "Madame had gone through so many shocks during the day that I wished to let her have a good night at all events, and I knew she would not sleep if she had been informed that, during her sleep, they would transfer M. Guibourg to prison."

"Why did you not say something, Stylite, since you heard the general's words?"

"Because of the same reason as the general's, Madame."

The duchess quietened down and seemed even to be pleased with the tactfulness Dermoncourt had exercised under the circumstances. Upon the observation he next made to her, that he had noticed she was still wearing the same dress as on the day before in which were the holes caused by the burns, and the same stockings, she replied—

"The few things I have are at the house of the Demoiselles Duguigny; besides, my dear general, during the

life I have led for six months past I have scarcely troubled myself about my wardrobe, that is why I have nothing. Will you be so good as to go to the ladies and bring me back what is there ? "

" I am at Madame's commands."

The duchess wrote a note and handed it to the general. One of the deputy-king's solicitors, who happened to be present, who had sealed up the room which the princess had occupied, as well as the room containing the hiding-place, was told by the general to go to the premises and bring back the articles mentioned in the note.

" We consequently betook ourselves," says Dermoncourt, " to the maison Duguigny, where we found very few things, as the duchess had told us. Among the articles mentioned in the note, there should have been a box full of bonbons ; we found the box but it was empty. On returning from my errand to the duchess, I gave an account of it and pointed out that I had indeed found the box, but that the bonbons had disappeared."

" Oh ! " said Madame, " the bonbons ? That is not surprising, they were eaten."

" What sort does Madame prefer ? I will have the privilege of obtaining them for her."

" If the bonbons have been eaten, I will accept the offer. I prefer sticks of chocolate with sweetmeats on top."

" Then Madame will allow me ? "

" Certainly."

The general called his secretary, Rusconi, and transmitted the duchess's wishes to him. Half an hour later, Madame had a basketful of bonbons. Dinner was announced at half-past six, and Dermoncourt took leave of the duchess.

" Good-bye till to-morrow, general," she said with quite childish gaiety, " and be sure do not forget to bring more bonbons."

The general went away. At nine o'clock Comte d'Erlon

took the trouble to go to Dermoncourt's house himself to tell him that it was believed for certain that M. de Bourmont was at la Chaslière.

" If that be so, general," replied Dermoncourt, " I will take fifty horse with me and, to-morrow morning, M. de Bourmont shall be here."

He set off at eleven o'clock. At midnight they waked the duchess, Mlle. Stylite de Kersabiec and M. de Ménars ; they got into a carriage, which drove them to the fosse, where a steamer waited for them, containing MM. Polo, deputy-mayor of Nantes ; Robineau de Bourgon, colonel of the National Guard ; Rocher, artillery standard-bearer of the same corps ; Chousserie, colonel of the gendarmerie ; Ferdinand Petit-Pierre, adjutant of the fort of Nantes ; and Joly, commissioner of the Paris police, who was to conduct the duchess to Blaye. Madame was accompanied on her way to the steamer by Comte d'Erlon, M. Ferdinand Favre, mayor of Nantes and by M. Maurice Duval, préfet. On stepping from the carriage, she looked round for Dermoncourt and, not seeing him, she asked where he was. They told her he was away on military business.

" Humph ! See," she said, " one more pretty trick ! "

The general in command of the division, the préfet and the mayor of Nantes were to accompany the duchess as far as Saint-Nazaire, and only to leave her after she had embarked on the brig *La Capricieuse*. As she stepped on board, Madame inquired if M. Guibourg was to follow her ; the préfet replied that it was impossible. Then she asked him for pen and ink and wrote the following note :—

" I have entreated for my old prisoner and they are going to write about it. God helping us, we shall see each other again. Greetings to all our friends. God keep them ! Have courage, and put your trust in Him. *Saint-Anne* is the patron saint of we *Bretons*."

This note was entrusted to M. Ferdinand Favre, who religiously sent it to its destination. The boat started

at four o'clock and glided silently past the sleeping town ; by eight they were on board *La Capricieuse.*

Madame remained at anchor in the roadstead for two days, the wind being contrary. At last, at seven a.m. on the 11th, *La Capricieuse* unfurled her sails and, towed by the steamer, which did not leave her until she was three leagues out at sea, she majestically vanished into the distance : four hours later, she had disappeared behind the headland of Pornic.

As for Dermoncourt, he returned to Nantes on the 9th at eight a.m., not having found any one at the château de la Chaslière, as may very well be supposed.

Meantime, M. de Bourmont was quietly in the country near Condé (Maine-et-Loire), where he had gone the very day of the duchess's departure for Blaye. He had left Nantes at six p.m., never suspecting that the superior police authorities would have the incivility of preventing him from visiting his estates and putting his affairs in order. From there, he returned to Lyons by Angers, where he was very warmly welcomed into a Legitimist household, which offered him so safe a retreat that he decided to prolong his stay there. The ladies of the house were very devoted and very inquisitive, having been told he was one of the leaders of the Legitimist party, but they did not know he was M. de Bourmont. They were very much puzzled to find out who this reserved and cautious personage might be, and exhausted themselves in conjectures. Finally, whether M. de Bourmont's dress gave them the notion or whether their imagination ran away with them, they ended by persuading themselves that he was an ecclesiastic ; and, unknown to him, to do him a pretty kindness, they put up in one of the rooms of the house an altar adorned as best they could, and procured the necessary vessels and ornaments. Next morning they came and told him with a satisfaction which they expected he would share, that all was prepared for him to say mass in the house.

M. de Bourmont listened with great seriousness to this proposition, which he made up for afterwards; but, not wishing to destroy an error in the ladies' minds so favourable to the incognito he wished to keep, he excused himself to them by saying he was in the habit, when travelling, of taking a tablet of chocolate in the morning, and had already taken his daily portion; he could not, therefore, present himself before the altar. The good ladies were convinced, and their veneration was increased for a man who displayed such scrupulousness. However, M. de Bourmont reflected that the altar was prepared, that they would think it very strange if he did not use it, and that he would be exposed to fresh importunities; so he sent for the master of the house and announced he was going away immediately. His host was astounded at this quick resolution; but M. de Bourmont put his mind at rest by saying—

"Your ladies wished to make me say mass this morning; if I remain, they will, perhaps, make me sing vespers in the afternoon. That is why I am going."

He at once took the coach, not for the purpose of going abroad, but to stay a few days in Paris. Finally, he left for Geneva and, whilst he was safely travelling from Lyons to Paris and from Paris to Geneva, the superior police sought for him in la Vendée: whether from stupidity or intention, they looked everywhere but where he was. In the pamphlet Deutz published, he boasts that it was on the advice which he gave to M. Maurice Duval that M. de Bourmont was not disturbed. He had sold Madame but preserved M. de Bourmont! . . . But Deutz was terribly punished: Hugo inflicted the following verses on him: *A l'homme qui a livré une femme!*

"A L'HOMME QUI A LIVRÉ UNE FEMME

O honte! ce n'est pas seulement cette femme,
Sacrée alors pour tous, faible cœur, mais grande âme,
Mais c'est lui, c'est son nom dans l'avenir maudit,
Ce sont les cheveux blancs de son père interdit;

C'est la pudeur publique en face regardée,
Tandis qu'il s'accouplait à son infâme idée ;
C'est l'honneur, c'est la foi, la pitié, le serment,
Voilà ce que ce juif a vendu lâchement !

Juif ! les impurs traitants à qui l'on vend son âme
Attendront bien longtemps avant qu'un plus infâme
Vienne réclamer d'eux, dans quelque jour d'effroi,
Le fond du sac plein d'or qu'on fit vomir sur toi !

Ce n'est pas même un juif ! c'est un païen immonde,
Un renégat, l'opprobre et le rebut du monde,
Un fétide apostat, un oblique étranger,
Qui nous donne du moins le bonheur de songer
Qu'après tant de revers et de guerres civiles,
Il n'est pas un bandit écumé dans nos villes,
Pas un forçat hideux, blanchi dans les prisons,
Qui veuille mordre en France au pain des trahisons.

Rien ne te disait donc dans l'âme, ô misérable !
Que la proscription est toujours vénérable ;
Qu'on ne bat pas le sein qui nous donna son lait ;
Qu'une fille des rois dont on fut le valet
Ne se met point en vente au fond d'un autre infâme,
Et que, n'étant plus reine, elle était encor femme ?

Rentre dans l'ombre où sont tous les monstres flétris
Qui, depuis quarante ans, bavent sur nos débris !
Rentre dans ce cloaque ! et que jamais ta tête,
Dans un jour de malheur ou dans un jour de fête,
Ne songe à reparaître au soleil des vivants !
Qu'ainsi qu'une fumée abandonnée aux vents,
Infecte et dont chacun se détourne au passage,
Ta vie erre au hasard de rivage en rivage.

Eh ! tais-toi, que veux-tu balbutier encor ?
Dis, n'as-tu pas vendu l'honneur, le vrai trésor ?
Garde tous les soufflets entassés sur ta joue. . .
Que fait l'excuse au crime et le fard sur la boue ?

Sans qu'un ami t'abrite à l'ombre de son toit,
Marche, autre juif errant, marche avec l'or qu'on voit
Luire à travers les doigts de tes mains mal fermées !
Tous les biens de ce monde en grappes parfumées
Pendent sur ton chemin, car le riche ici-bas
A tout, hormis l'honneur, qui ne s'achète pas !

Hâte-toi de jouir, maudit! et sans relâche
Marche! et qu'en te voyant on dise: 'C'est ce lâche! . . .'
Marche! et que le remords soit ton seul compagnon! . . .
Marche sans rien pouvoir arracher de ton nom!
Car le mépris public, ombre de la bassesse,
Croît d'année en année et repousse sans cesse;
Et va s'épaississant sur les traîtres pervers
Comme la feuille au front des sapins toujours verts!

Et quand la tombe, un jour,—cette embûche profonde,
Qui s'ouvre tout à coup sur les choses du monde,—
Te fera, d'épouvante et d'horreur agité,
Passer de cette vie à la réalité,
La réalité sombre, éternelle, immobile!
Quand, d'instant en instant plus seul et plus débile,
Tu te cramponneras en vain à ton trésor;
Quand la mort, t'accostant, couché sur des tas d'or,
Videra, brusquement ta main crispée et pleine,
Comme une main d'enfant qu'un homme ouvre sans peine;
Alors, dans cet abîme où tout traître descend,
L'un roulé dans la fange, et l'autre teint de sang,
Tu tomberas, perdu sur la fatale grève
Que Dante Alighieri vit avec l'œil du rêve!
Tu tomberas damné, désespéré, banni!
Afin que ton forfait ne soit pas impuni,
Et que ton âme, errante au milieu de ces âmes,
Y soit la plus abjecte entre les plus infâmes!
Et, lorsqu'ils te verront paraître au milieu d'eux,
Ces fourbes dont l'histoire inscrit les noms hideux,
Que l'or tenta jadis, mais à qui, d'âge en âge,
Chaque peuple, en passant, vient cracher au visage,
Tous ceux, les plus obscurs comme les plus fameux,
Qui portent sur leur lèvre un baiser venimeux;
Judas, qui vend son Dieu; Leclerc, qui vend sa ville,
Groupe au louche regard, engeance ingrate et vile,
Tous, en foule, accourront joyeux sur ton chemin,
Et Louvel, indigné, repoussera ta main!"

The poet's malediction pursued the guilty man. Thanks to the enormous sum he had received, which he has always denied, saying he betrayed his benefactress to obey a patriotic feeling which urged him to rid his country from civil war; thanks, we say, to this enormous sum, he

found a wife . . . a woman who consented to couple herself to such a man! But this was not all; he must also find a mayoralty. Deutz put up successively for the twelve mayoralties of Paris; now, as he had not been resident for the six months which the law exacted, they were closed to him, and glad to have an excuse for forbidding him to put his foot on their threshold. Then he went outside its borders and presented himself to M. de Frémicourt, mayor of la Villette. By what subterfuge did he discover that magistrate's religion? By what forgery did Deutz fabricate a certificate of residence for over six months in the house of M. Pierre Delacour, No. 41 rue de Flandre? What portion of his shameful gold did he have to part with to get that certificate? We do not know. We only know he was married at la Villette by M. de Frémicourt. Now, see what happened. Two years later, M. de Frémicourt and M. Gisquet both put up as deputies for the arrondissement of Saint-Denis. M. Gisquet, the Government candidate, begged M. de Frémicourt to leave the Saint-Denis arrondissement to him, where he was sure of election, and to become the candidate for Cambrai, where M. de Frémicourt's election would be as certain as his would be at Saint-Denis. M. de Frémicourt gave way to the entreaties of the préfet de police and put up for Cambrai in opposition to M. Taillandier. He was about to overcome his opponent when M. Taillandier learnt that he was the M. de Frémicourt who had married Deutz. M. Taillandier left instantly for la Villette, brought away the civil act announcing the fact of the marriage of Deutz, presented himself before M. Pierre Delacour, obtained from him and from the tenants of house No. 41, in the rue de Flandre, a certificate stating that Deutz had never lived in that house, and, fortified by the act and the certificate, he overthrew his opponent, who, although he had been ignorant of the fraud, was hooted out upon the single accusation, " M. de Frémicourt is the mayor who married

Deutz!" There was, we see, still some generous feelings left in France. Now what became of Deutz? Did he die in poverty, as some say? Did he go to the United States, as say others? We do not know what to say. All the biographers leave Deutz alone after his crime, as if such a Judas must be left to God to be dealt with! God preserve all honest men from coming in contact with him, if he be living! and if he be dead, from passing over his grave!

BOOK VII

CHAPTER I

Le Roi s'amuse—Criticism and censorship

WHILST M. Thiers's police were arresting Madame la duchesse de Berry at Nantes, the censorship was stopping the drama of *Le Roi s'amuse* at Paris. The performance had taken place on 22 November. I cannot give an account of it, for I was not present ; a slight coolness had crept into my relations with Hugo ; friends in common had nearly set us at variance. The day after the performance the play was cruelly forbidden, and the author had to appeal from that decision before the Tribunal de Commerce. Under any other circumstances, the Opposition newspapers would have sided with Victor Hugo ; they would have cried out against this oppression and tyranny. But not here ! the hatred they bore towards the romantic school was so great, that they vied with one another, not so much to put the Government in the right, as to who should put the author most in the wrong.

Listen to what criticism said of the work of one of the most eminent poets who had ever lived. We will follow it in its own words and treat it fairly. We do not know who wrote the article we have in our hands : it is unsigned ; only, it is a specimen of what was done then, has been done since and will probably always be perpetrated in

criticism. A shameful specimen! But let us judge for ourselves.

"THÉÂTRE-FRANÇAIS

Le Roi s'amuse.

A poetical drama in five acts by M. VICTOR HUGO.

"Criticism attempted after *Hernani* and specially after *Marion Delorme*, to make M. Victor Hugo listen to two pieces of *wholesome truth* politely expressed, as is due to a man of great and genuine talent; the first is that the *efforts of M. Victor Hugo revealed absolute impotence and sterility of conception*; the second, that M. Victor Hugo adopted a pernicious system which, instead of conducing to originality, drove him to the *trivial* and *absurd*. . . ."

Certainly it is impossible to be more polite. The natural consequence of this advice ought to have been to make Hugo return to his odes and romances. Luckily, M. Hugo believed himself to be as strong as those who told him these *wholesome truths*, and he has continued in spite of criticism. To this disastrous pig-headedness of the poet we owe *Lucrèce Borgia*, *Marie Tudor*, *Ruy Blas*, *Angelo* and *Les Burgraves*.

"M. Hugo has taken no notice of these truths: he has persisted in writing dramas, and, far from modifying his system, he has exceeded it in a monstrous fashion. In his first dramas, he still preserved some principle of truth and of beauty, some feeling of morality and decency, even amidst his eccentricities. In *Le Roi s'amuse*, he rids himself of everything and tramples history, right, morality, the dignity of art, delicacy, under his feet. There is progress . . ."

Still under cover of the same virtue of politeness, let us follow the critic—

"In the first place, the subject of the drama is not historic, although historical characters figure in it. We will pass that over, for, as time flies, it is a peccadillo.

But at least a conscientious author in assigning a rôle to his historical personages in a *fictitious case* or rather *action* should so apply it as not to calumniate them; the realistic school is bolder and has few scruples. You shall see how M. Hugo treats King François I., the court of that prince, and the poet Clément Marot on the stage of the Comédie-Française. . . ."

Ah! monsieur critic, it well becomes you to defend ill-treated poets! You who have treated M. Hugo so finely! It is true that, in your eyes, M. Hugo is not a poet of the same calibre as Clément Marot. Turn your glasses back, monsieur critic, and take the measure of the author of the *Odes et Ballades Orientales*, *Feuilles d'automne*, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, *Hernani* and *Marion Delorme*, even if you have to stand on tip-toe or, if necessary, climb on a chair to do so.

"In the first act, we are at the court of François I.: sounds of distant music are heard; there is a ball. A ball was a novelty some years ago! There is one in every play . . ."

Where on earth do you find one in *Henri III.*, monsieur critic? Or in *Christine* or *Richard Darlington* or in *La Tour de Nesle*? . . . Where can you discover a ball in *Hernani* or in *Marion Delorme*? There is, it is true, a kind of musical entertainment in *Hernani*, a sort of ball in *Antony*; but you see it has not been overdone.

"Soon they will be indispensable," continued the critic. "So François I. is in search of amusement and seeks everything he can to be entertained. The courtiers talk, laugh and seek to amuse him. There are a great number of them: M. de Cossé, M. de Simiane, M. de Montmorency, Clément Marot and a host of high-born people, and, in their centre, the king and Triboulet, the king's jester, in cloth of gold, a fool's bauble in his hand. Madame de Cossé lets her glove fall; the king picks it up. The gentlemen laugh and gossip about the *wife of Cossé*. The king is in love with her; Triboulet advises him to get rid of the husband: that is, to have him hung; the king is

amused and so are the courtiers. After this, there is no more about the *wife of Cossé*, and we do not see her again. This is indeed a pity, for she is pretty.

"The action does not begin yet, but the conversations continue. Triboulet tells the king much evil about savants and poets, and we hear François I. say later that *it is not weather fit to turn even a poet out of doors*. The courtiers, for their part, discuss the mistress of Triboulet. One of them replies—

'Ma foi de gentilhomme,
Je m'en soucie autant qu'un poisson d'une pomme!'"

Here the critic is mistaken and I wonder at it, his error benefits him nothing. It is not a nobleman who says the lines quoted by the critic, neither are they addressed to Cossé or about his wife. The man who utters them is the king, and the people, for whom he cares so little, are the savants.

"TRIBOULET.

Les femmes, sire, ah! Dieu! . . . c'est le ciel, c'est la terre,
C'est-tout! mais vous avez les femmes, vous avez
Les femmes! Laissez-moi tranquille, vous rêvez
De vouloir des savants.

LE ROI.

Ma foi de gentilhomme,
Je m'en soucie autant qu'un poisson d'une pomme!"

"At this juncture, the Comte de Saint-Vallier appears on the scenes; he comes on to utter deadly reproaches against the king, who has granted him his life, *for having conspired* (it should be *because he has* and not *for having*, but critics do not look so closely into things as that) to seduce his daughter Diane de Poitiers. It is noticeable that M. Victor Hugo is singularly fond of old men and puts them in all his dramas. But the language he puts into the mouth of Saint-Vallier is noble and fine. So the lines were applauded unanimously but the tirade is lengthy. . . ."

This was the opportunity, monsieur critic, since you have quoted the lines you thought ridiculous, to have

quoted some at least that you thought beautiful. True, such quotation would have destroyed the harmony of the sarcastic tone of your criticism. But we will quote them instead of you. Listen attentively to the language of the man who writes these lines, he who is in all good faith advised not to write for the theatre any more because he is impotent, sterile, trivial and absurd.

" SAINT-VALLIER

Une insulte de plus !—Vous, sire, écoutez-moi
Comme vous le devez, puisque vous êtes roi !
Vous m'avez fait, un jour, mener pieds nus en Grève ;
Là, vous m'avez fait grâce ainsi que dans un rêve,
Et je vous ai béni, ne sachant, en effet,
Ce qu'un roi cache au fond d'une grâce qu'il fait.
Or, vous aviez caché ma honte dans la mienne.
Oui, sire, sans respect pour une race ancienne,
Pour le sang des Poitiers, noble depuis mille ans !
Tandis que, revenant de la Grève à pas lents,
Je priais dans mon cœur le Dieu de la victoire
Qu'il vous donnât mes jours de vie en jours de gloire,
Vous, François de Valois, le soir du même jour,
Sans crainte, sans pitié, sans pudeur, sans amour,
Dans votre lit, tombeau de la vertu des femmes,
Vous avez froidement, sous vos baisers infâmes,
Terni, flétri, souillé, déshonoré, brisé
Diane de Poitiers, comtesse de Brézé ! . . .
Quoi ! lorsque j'attendais l'arrêt qui me condamne,
Tu courais donc au Louvre, ô ma chaste Diane !
Et lui, ce roi sacré chevalier par Bayard,
Jeune homme auquel il faut des plaisirs de vieillard,
Pour quelques jours de plus, dont Dieu seul sait le compte,
Ton père sous ses pieds, te marchandait ta honte ;
Et cet affreux tréteau, chose horrible à penser !
Qu'un matin le bourreau vint en Grève dresser,
Avant la fin du jour, devait être, ô misère !
Ou le lit de la fille, ou l'échafaud du père !
O Dieu qui nous jugez, qu'avez-vous dit là-haut,
Quand vos regards ont vu, sur ce même échafaud,
Se vautrer, triste et louche, et sanglante et souillée,
La luxure royale en clémence habillée ? . . .
Sire ! en faisant cela, vous avez mal agi.
Que du sang d'un vieillard le pavé fût rougi,

C'était bien : ce vieillard, peut-être respectable,
Le méritait, étant de ceux du connétable ;
Mais que pour le vieillard vous ayez pris l'enfant ;
Que vous ayez broyé sous un pied triomphant
La pauvre femme en pleurs, à s'effrayer trop prompte,
C'est une chose impie et dont vous rendrez compte !
Vous avez dépassé votre droit d'un grand pas :
Le père était à vous, mais la fille, non pas.
Ah ! vous m'avez fait grâce ! ah ! vous nommez la chose
Une grâce ! et je suis un ingrat, je suppose !
Sire, au lieu d'abuser ma fille, bien plutôt
Que n'êtes-vous venu vous-même en mon cachot ?
Je vous aurais crié : ' Faites-moi mourir . . . Grâce !
Oh ! grâce pour ma fille, et grâce pour ma race !
Oh ! faites-moi mourir ! la tombe et non l'affront !
Pas de tête plutôt qu'une souillure au front !
Oh ! monseigneur le roi, puisque ainsi l'on vous nomme,
Croyez-vous qu'un chrétien, un comte, un gentilhomme
Soit moins décapité, répondez, monseigneur,
Quand, au lieu de la tête, il lui manque l'honneur ? '
J'aurais dit cela, sire, et, le soir, dans l'église,
Dans mon cercueil sanglant, baisant ma barbe grise,
Ma Diane au cœur pur, ma fille au front sacré,
Honorée, eût prié pour son père honoré ! . . .
Sire, je ne viens point redemander ma fille :
Quand on n'a plus d'honneur, on n'a plus de famille.
Qu'elle vous aime ou non d'un amour insensé,
Je n'ai rien à reprendre où la honte a passé.
Gardez-la !—Seulement, je me suis mis en tête
De venir vous troubler ainsi dans chaque fête ;
Et jusqu'à ce qu'un père, un frère ou quelque époux—
La chose arrivera—nous ait vengé de vous,
Pâle, à tous vos banquets je reviendrai vous dire :
' Vous avez mal agi, vous avez mal fait, sire ! '
Et vous m'écouterez, et votre front terni
Ne se relèvera que quand j'aurai fini.
Vous voudrez, pour forcer ma vengeance à se taire,
Me rendre au bourreau ; non ! vous ne l'oserez faire,
De peur que ce ne soit mon spectre qui, demain,
(*Montrant sa tete.*)
Ne vienne vous parler, cette tête à la main ! "

One can conceive why the critic does not quote the lines we have just put before the reader: What would

become of his prose by the side of such verse? After this splendid outburst of Saint-Vallier, the king, enraged, exclaims—

"On s'oublie à ce point d'audace et de délire! . . .
(*A. M. de Pienne.*)
Duc, arrêtez monsieur!

TRIBOULET.

Le bonhomme est fou, sire.

SAINT-VALLIER, *levant le bras.*

Soyez maudits tous deux!
(*Au roi.*)
Sire, ce n'est pas bien:
Sur le lion mourant vous lâchez votre chien!
(*A Triboulet.*)
Qui que tu sois, valet à langue de vipère,
Que fais risée ainsi de la douleur d'un père,
Sois maudit!
(*Au roi.*)
J'avais droit d'être par vous traité
Comme une majesté par une majesté.
Vous êtes roi, moi père, et l'âge vaut le trône.
Nous avons tous les deux au front une couronne
Où nul ne doit lever de regards insolents,
Vous de fleurs de lys d'or, et moi de cheveux blancs.
Roi, quand un sacrilége ose insulter la vôtre,
C'est vous qui la vengez;—c'est Dieu qui venge l'autre!"

The critic goes on—

"The Comte de Saint-Vallier finishes his harangue and goes out cursing the king and Triboulet. The king laughs, Triboulet seems thunderstruck. *This riot of unedifying conversations, the ball and the character of Comte de Saint-Vallier* are in no sort of way connected with the action of the play, and *the whole of the first act is taken up in informing us that Triboulet has a mistress and that the gentlemen of the court wish to take her away from him. . . .*"

Say, monsieur critic, that you *personally see no connection between the ball and M. de Saint-Vallier and the action*, but forbear from saying they have no connection in any way whatever. You are blind and deaf, monsieur

critic; but, luckily, we shall not stop our ears and put out our eyes for the sole satisfaction of being like you. Stay, you shall see why M. de Saint-Vallier is not connected with the action. The author takes the trouble to tell you himself—

"It appears that writers of criticism pretend that their morals are scandalised by *Le Roi s'amuse*. The play disgusted the modesty of the gendarmes; the Léotand Brigade was there[1] and thought it obscene; officers of morality hid their faces and M. Vidocq blushed; accordingly, the word of command which the censorship gave the police was stammered out in our midst for some days in these terse words—

"'THE PLAY IS IMMORAL.'"

Halloa! my masters! Silence on this point. Let us explain ourselves, however; not to the police, with whom I, an honest man, decline to discuss such matters, but to the few respectable and conscientious persons who, upon hearsay, or after seeing the performance, allowed themselves to be led away into sharing that opinion, for which, perhaps, the name alone of the guilty poet should have been sufficient refutation. The drama is now printed and, if you were not at the performance, read it; if you were, still read it. Bear in mind that this representation is less a representation than a battle, a sort of battle of Montlhéry (excuse us for this rather ambitious comparison), which the Parisians and the Burgundians both claimed to have *won* according to Mathieu. The play is immoral. Do you think so? Is it so fundamentally? The groundwork of the play is as follows:—

"Triboulet is deformed, ill, the court buffoon, a threefold wretchedness which makes him evilly disposed. He hates the king because he is king, the lords because they

[1] The agent Léotand who arrested M. de Chateaubriand in 1832.

are lords, and men because they have not all got humps on their backs; his only solace is unceasingly to pit the lords against the king, to break the weakest against the strongest. He depraves, corrupts and debases the king, drives him to tyranny, ignorance and vice. He sets him at loggerheads with all the noble families, unceasingly pointing out some wife to seduce, a sister to carry off, a daughter to dishonour.

"The king is like an omnipotent puppet in the hands of Triboulet, he cuts off lives whilst the buffoon plays his jokes: one day at a fête, just when Triboulet is urging the king to carry off M. de Cossé's wife, M. de Saint-Vallier finds his way to the king and openly upbraids him for the dishonour of Diane de Poitiers. The father whose daughter the king has taken is made game of and insulted by Triboulet. He lifts his arm and curses Triboulet. *And from this the whole play springs.* The real subject of the drama is M. DE SAINT-VALLIER'S MALEDICTION."

Why did you say then, monsieur critic, that "*the unedifying riot of conversations, the ball and the character of Saint-Vallier* ARE IN NO WAY CONNECTED WITH THE ACTION." You do not seem to me to understand the author. But let us see what the author says; we will see what you have said afterwards. We will promise you not to compare his prose with yours. Listen to what Victor Hugo says himself. We are at the second act—

"Upon whom does this malediction fall? Upon Triboulet, the king's fool? No, upon Triboulet as man, as a father with a heart, who has a daughter. All lies in the fact of Triboulet possessing a daughter: she is all he has in the world. He conceals her from all eyes in a deserted quarter and a lonely house. The more he circulates the contagion of vice and of debauchery through the town, the more closely he keeps his daughter walled up and isolated. He brings up his child in innocence, faith and modesty. His greatest fear is lest she come to harm; for, wicked as he is, he knows how much suffering it brings. Well, the old man's curse strikes Triboulet

through the only thing he loves in the world—his daughter. The very king whom Triboulet urges on to abduction seduces his daughter. The fool is struck by Providence exactly in the same way as M. de Saint-Vallier, and, when his daughter is seduced and lost, he lays a snare for the king to revenge her: but it is his daughter who falls into it. Thus, Triboulet has two pupils, the king and his daughter; the king whom he instructs in vice, his daughter whom he has brought up to virtue. The one destroys the other. He intends to abduct Madame de Cossé for the king, but it is his daughter whom he carries away. He means to assassinate the king to avenge his daughter, but instead assassinates her. The chastisement does not stop half-way; the malediction of Diane's father is fulfilled upon the father of Blanche. Doubtless it is not for us to decide if the conception is dramatic or not; but it is certainly a moral one."

Well, reader, what is your opinion?

"Why! the same as Victor Hugo. But why, then, does the critic look upon it and understand it so wrongly? Is he blind and deaf?"

Oh, dear reader, that would be too great a happiness for you and us! No, you know the proverb—"None so blind as those who wont see, or so deaf as those who do not wish to hear."

What the author says of the curse of Saint-Vallier is so true that the second act opens with these words of Triboulet—

"Ce vieillard m'a maudit!"

But, as we have said, the critic does not perceive this. He continues his analysis—

"At the second act Triboulet wanders through the night near a modest house next to the hôtel de Cossé. A man with a hideous expression comes and offers him his services. His trade is killing; his charges are not dear, and he works at home and in the town. Triboulet replies that he has no need of him at present. Saltabadil (the bandit's name) goes off and Triboulet enters the house. He then utters a long monologue expressing

all the suffering his trade of king's jester causes him. Here, M. Hugo again breaks into an eloquent and brilliant tirade in beautiful lines . . ."

Why not quote them, monsieur critic? Ah! yes, but the fine verses would scorch his lips.[1]

"Triboulet enters his daughter's house and expresses all his parental affection for her," continues the critic. "Here again," he adds, "are several beautiful verses . . ."

And he passes them over; but are beautiful lines so common that you scorn them thus? Can you write them? or can your wife or your friends? Can M. Planche or M. Janin or M. Lireux compose in the same style as this?

"BLANCHE.

. . . Mon bone père, au moins, parlez-moi de ma mère!

TRIBOULET.

Oh! ne réveille pas une pensée amère:
Ne me rappelles pas qu'autrefois j'ai trouvé
— Et, si tu n'étais là, je dirais: 'J'ai rêvé!'—
Une femme, contraire à la plupart des femmes,
Qui, dans ce monde, où rien n'appareille les âmes,
Me voyant seul, infirme, et pauvre, et détesté,
M'aima pour ma misère et ma difformité!
Elle est morte, emportant dans la tombe avec elle
L'angélique secret de son amour fidèle,
De son amour passé sur moi comme un éclair;
Rayon du paradis tombé dans mon enfer!
Que la terre, toujours à me recevoir prête,
Soit légère à ce sein où reposa ma tête!
. . . . . .

BLANCHE.

Mon père . . .

TRIBOULET, *à sa fille.*

Est-il ailleurs un cœur qui me réponde?
Oh! je t'aime pour tout ce que je hais au monde!
— Assieds-toi près de moi. Viens, parlons de cela
Dis, aimes-tu ton père? Et puisque nous voilà

---

[1] See Appendix.

Ensemble, et que ta main entre mes mains repose,
Qu'est-ce donc qui nous force à parler d'autre chose ?
Ma fille, ô seul bonheur que le ciel m'ait permis !
D'autres ont des parents, des frères, des amis,
Une femme, un mari, des vassaux, un cortége
D'aïeux et d'alliés, plusieurs enfants, que sais-je ?
Moi, je n'ai que toi seule ! Un autre est riche ; — eh bien,
Toi seule es mon trésor, et toi seule es mon bien !
Un autre croit en Dieu ; je ne crois qu'en ton âme !
D'autres ont la jeunesse et l'amour d'une femme ;
Ils ont l'orgueil, l'éclat, la grâce et la santé ;
Ils sont beaux ; moi, vois-tu, je n'ai que ta beauté !
Chère enfant ! — ma cité, mon pays, ma famille,
Mon épouse, ma mère, et ma sœur, et ma fille,
Mon bonheur, ma richesse, et mon culte, et ma loi,
Mon univers, c'est toi, toujours toi, rien que toi !
De tout autre côté, ma pauvre âme est froissée.
— Oh ! si je te perdais ! . . . Non, c'est une pensée
Que je ne pourrais pas supporter un moment !
Souris-moi donc un peu. — Ton sourire est charmant !
Oui, c'est toute ta mère ! — Elle était aussi belle.
Tu te passes souvent la main au front comme elle,
Comme pour l'essuyer, car il faut au cœur pur
Un front tout innocent et des yeux tout azur.
Tu rayonnes pour moi d'une angélique flamme,
A travers ton beau corps, mon âme voit ton âme,
Même les yeux fermés, c'est égal, je te vois.
Le jour me vient de toi ! Je me voudrais parfois
Aveugle, et l'œil voilé d'obscurité profonde,
Afin de n'avoir pas d'autre soleil au monde ! "

Well ! monsieur critic, shall I tell you something ? If a fairy, as in the pretty children's tales you have not read, for you were never a child, came with his golden wand in his hand and said to me : " What do you wish, desire and pine for ? Ask, I serve youth, fortune and ambition ; at one word, you can have twenty-five years added to your life or be a millionaire or a prince ! " I should say to him, " Oh good, beauteous fairy, I would like to be able to compose such lines as the above."

But now let us follow the critic through the third act. It relates how Blanche is taken to the Louvre ; how the

king recognises in her whom he supposes to be Triboulet's mistress the Blanche with whom he is enamoured, and how Blanche recognises in the king the Gaucher Mahiet whom she loves; how Blanche, not knowing whither to fly, and seeing an open door, flies through it and finds herself in the king's private chamber; how the king then enters behind her and shuts the door; after which the lords troop in, laughing, followed by Triboulet in despair. But let us allow the critic to speak—

"Triboulet comes on and looks at them all. The queen wants the king and they have just sent for him. 'He is not yet up.—But he was here just a moment ago.—He is out hunting.—But his huntsman are not out.'

—'On vous dit, comprenez-vous ceci ?
Que le roi ne veut voir personne.

TRIBOULET.

Elle est ici !'

"Triboulet wants to push his way into the king's room, but the courtiers fling him back; he implores them. They laugh at him and Triboulet pours out upon them insults and curses. 'You are no nobles,' he says to them,

'Au milieu des huées,
Vos mères aux laquais se sont prostituées !'

"*And the gentlemen put up with this !*"

Yes they bear it, monsieur critic, and I will tell you why. All the lords who have lent themselves to abduction, and are quite prepared to put their hands to violation, think they have carried off Triboulet's mistress and learn suddenly they have carried away his daughter. You do not say that that has escaped your memory: it is told in beautiful lines, and Ligier's voice is not one anybody can pretend not to hear.

"M. DE PIENNE, *riant.*
Triboulet a perdu sa maîtresse ! —Gentille
Ou laide, qu'il la cherche ailleurs.

TRIBOULET.

Je veux ma fille . . .

TOUS.

Sa fille !

TRIBOULET, *croisant les bras.*

C'est ma fille ! — Oui, riez maintenant !
Ah ! pous restez muets ! Vous trouvez surprenant
Que ce bouffon soit père, et qu'il ait une fille ?
Les loups et les seigneurs n'ont-ils pas leur famille ?
Ne puis-je avoir aussi la mienne ? Allons, assez !
Que si vous plaisantiez, c'est charmant ; finissez !
. . . . . .
Elle est là !

(*Les courtisans se placent devant la porte du roi.*)

MAROT.

Sa folie en furie est tournée.

TRIBOULET, *reculant avec désespoir.*

Courtisans ! courtisans ! démons ! race damnée !
C'est donc vrai qu'ils m'ont pris ma fille, ces bandits !
Une femme, à leurs yeux, ce n'est rien, je vous dis !
Quand le roi, par bonheur, est un roi de débauches,
Les femmes des seigneurs, lorsqu'ils ne sont pas gauches,
Les servent fort. — L'honneur d'une vierge, pour eux,
C'est un luxe inutile, un trésor onéreux.
Une femme est un champ qui rapporte, une ferme
Dont le royal loyer se paye à chaque terme.
N'est ce pas que c'est vrai, messeigneurs ? — En effet,
Vous lui vendriez tous, si ce n'est déjà fait,
Pour un nom, pour un titre, ou toute autre chimère,
(*A M. de Brion.*)
Toi, ta femme, Brion !
(*A M. de Gordes.*)
Toi, ta sœur !
(*Au jeune page de Pardaillan.*)
Toi, ta mere ? "

The critic is surprised that all the lords are silent. It does not surprise us, especially if they have children of their own.

Is not the despair of a father, at the destruction of his

daughter, frightful and solemn and fateful enough to cause instant silence? The author of the work, a father, who wrote this magnificent line—

"Et les cœurs de lion sont les vrais cœurs de père,"

thought so. Is he wrong? So much to his credit. If you are right, the more is it to your discredit!

But if this be so, you say, he ought to have pointed us out a beauty instead of a defect. Oh! he warns you loudly enough. Listen again—

"UN PAGE *se verse un verre de vin au buffet, et es met à boire en fredonnant:*

Quand Bourdon vit Marsaille,
Il a dit à ses gens:
'Vrai-Dieu! quel capitaine . . .'

TRIBOULET, *se retournant.*

Je ne sais à quoi tient, vicomte d'Aubusson,
Que je te brise aux dents ton verre et ta chanson!"

You see among the whole of those courtiers, only one sneers, and he a child of fifteen, who knows nothing about paternity. Oh! you say, that is true enough; but it is too involved, we missed the point. Such things, messieurs, are not visible to the outer eye, they are felt; the heart has eyes to see them.

Then, you add, you have no children. True, eunuchs and critics usually die without posterity.

We had got to the words, monsieur critic—

"And the gentlemen put up with that, *and when Triboulet bade them they went away.* TRIBOULET REMAINS ALONE, and soon his daughter rushes out dishevelled, beside herself, and flies into his arms."

Ah! you see more clearly than you say, monsieur critic, for here you lie! No, it does not happen like that at all.

"TRIBOULET.

Ah! Dieu! vous ne savez que rire ou que vous taire!
C'est donc un grand plaisir de voir un pauvre père

Se meurtrir la poitrine, et s'arracher du front
Des cheveux que deux nuits pareilles blanchiront !

(*La porte de la chambre du roi s'ouvre ; Blanche en sort éperdue, égarée, en désordre ; elle vient tomber dans les bras de son père avec un cri terrible.*)

BLANCHE.

Mon père, ah ! . . .

TRIBOULET, *la serrant dans ses bras.*

Mon enfant ! ah ! c'est elle ! ah ! ma fille !
Ah ! messieurs !
(*Suffoqué de sanglots, et riant au travers.*)
Voyez-vous, c'est toute ma famille,
Mon ange ! — Elle de moins, quel deuil dans ma maison !
— Messeigneurs, n'est-ce pas que j'avais bien raison ? . . .
(*A Blanche.*)
Mais pourquoi pleures, tu ?

BLANCHE.

Malheureux que nous sommes !
La honte . . .

TRIBOULET.

Que dis-tu ?

BLANCHE.

Pas devant tous ces hommes !
Rougir devant vous seul !

TRIBOULET, *se tournant vers la porte du roi.*

Oh ! l'infâme ! — Elle aussi !

BLANCHE.

Seule, seule avec vous !

TRIBOULET, *aux seigneurs.*

Allez-vous-en d'ici !
Et, si le roi François par malheur se hasarde
A passer près d'ici . . .
(*A M. de Vermandois.*)
Vous êtes de sa garde,
Dites-lui de ne pas entrer, — que je suis là !
(*Les seigneurs sortent.*)"

You can see well enough, monsieur critic, that Triboulet is not alone when his daughter comes and flings herself

into his arms, *and that if the lords go out*, it is not because the king's fool has ordered them out, but because they know how to conduct themselves before the father of Blanche. Instead of being false, as you make out, the scene, on the contrary, is so profoundly wrought that you did not dare to follow it in its deepest wounds; this was an unknown abyss to your comprehension. Oh! monsieur critic, to ply your trade, you must be almost as great as the writer you criticise. Can a Lilliputian analyse a Gulliver?

"At this moment," the critic continues, "the Comte de Saint-Vallier, who is being led to the Bastille, recommences his imprecations against François I., and says—

'Pusique, par votre roi d'outrages abreuvé,
Ma malédiction n'a pas encor trouvé,
Ici-bas ni là-haut, de voix qui me réponde,
Pas une foudre au ciel, pas un bras d'homme au monde,
Je n'espère plus rien. — Ce roi prospérera.

TRIBOULET, *relevant la tête.*

Comte! vous vous trompez! —Quelqu'un vous vengera!'"

You see, monsieur critic, you are wrong; M. de Saint-Vallier does serve an end.

"The third act is revoltingly immoral!" the critic pursues. "The same disgusting features await us in the fourth act. We see the house of the brigand Saltabadil; a sort of pothouse. The king comes there in the middle of the night; he sits down to table and calls for drink: they bring it him."

We will let the author reply to the accusation expressed in such beautiful language. If the work is moral in construction, can it be immoral in execution? The question thus put seems to us to answer itself. But let us see. Probably there is nothing immoral in the first or second act. Is it the situation in the third act which shocks

you? Read the third act and tell us if the impression which, in all probability, it produces, is not of profound purity, virtue and rectitude?

"Is it the fourth act? But since when has a king been forbidden to pay court to a public-house servant on the stage? It is no novelty in history, nor in the theatre: history permits us to show you François I. drunk in the kennels of the rue du Pelican. To take a king to a low place is nothing new either: the Greek theatre—the classical one—did it; Shakespeare, who is of the romantic theatre, did it. Very well then, the author of this drama has not done so. He knows all that has been written about the house of Saltabadil; but why make out that he has said what he has not said? Why force him to exceed a limit which is entirely beside the mark, which he has not exceeded? The gipsy Maguelonne so much maligned is surely not bolder than all the Lisettes and Martons of the old-school theatre. Saltabadil's pothouse is a hostelry, a tavern, the tavern de la *Pomme de pin*, a suspected inn and a cut-throat place may be! but not a brothel; it is a sombre, terrible, horrible, fearful place if you like, but it is not an obscene one. There remain details as to style. Read! the author accepts as judges of the strict severity of his style the same persons who are shocked by Juliet's nurse and Ophelia's father, by Beaumarchais and by Regnard, by the *École des femmes* and *Amphitryon*, by Dandin and Sganarelle, and by the great scene in *Tartufe*. Tartufe was also accused of immorality, in his time. Only, in this case, when it was necessary to be frank, the author had to do it at his own risk and peril, but always with gravity and restraint; he wished his art to be chaste, but not prudish."

Let us return to the criticism.[1]

"Saltabadil is to give up the body at midnight. The king, half drunk, is at his house, defenceless and laid down, and it is a quarter to twelve. Maguelonne begs her brother to spare so good looking a young fellow. The brigand refuses, for he is an honest brigand and conducts his trade conscientiously; only, he desires that some one

[1] See Appendix.

else should appear so that he may kill him and deliver him up in place of the other. Blanche has returned and hears everything; she has been seduced by the king; she does not love him, for he consorts with the most degraded of women. But Blanche will die for him! *This is a devotion on the part of a young girl which no one but M. Victor Hugo would have conceived possible. . . .*"

Why so? Do you mean to say that Victor Hugo is the only one who has a large enough heart to understand such devotion? Then it seems to me that the blame turns singularly into praise.

"Blanche knocks at the door, goes in . . . and the curtain falls. Why does not M. Hugo show us the assassination? What is one horror more? In the fifth act, Triboulet comes in front of the pothouse. It is a stormy night; midnight strikes. The brigand then opens his door and drags a sack along the ground containing a dead body. He receives the remainder of the twenty crowns and shuts his door. Triboulet puts his foot on the body, saying—

'Ceci, c'est un buffon! et ceci, c'est un roi!'

Then he raves over the body and curses it, and struts about and prates of glory, of revolutions and of crowns, and returns to the body and addresses these extraordinary lines to it—

'M'entends tu? m'entends-tu? m'entends-tu? m'entends-tu . . .'"

It would, indeed, be very extraordinary if it were thus, but, unfortunately, there is no such line. This is the real line, or, rather these are the lines—

"Je te hais, *m'entends-tu*? c'est moi, roi gentilhomme;
Moi, ce fou, ce bouffon; moi, cette moitié d'homme,
Cet animal douteux à qui tu disais: 'Chien!'
C'est que, quand la vengeance est en nous, vois-tu bien,
Dans le cœur le plus mort, il n'est plus rien qui dorme;
Le plus chétif grandit, le plus vil se transforme,
L'esclave tirs alors sa haine du fourreau,
Et le chat devient tigre, et le bouffon bourreau!'"

Far enough, you will agree, from the line invented by the critic—

"M'entends-tu ? m'entends-tu ? m'entends-tu ? m'entends-tu ? "

"Finally," continues our Aristarchus, "after an interminable monologue" (certainly interminable if you have understood all the lines in the same fashion as the one you have quoted, but which, were you a poet, monsieur critic, would seem short to you!),[1] "Triboulet drags the body to him and is going to fling it into the Seine, when a cavalier comes out of the tavern and disappears along the quay. Triboulet has recognised the king; then he tears open the sack, and, by the light of a torch, he recognises his daughter! He calls for help, and torches are brought! Blanche still breathes; they fetch a doctor, but she dies immediately he arrives, and Triboulet falls dead the same instant.

"Such is this monstrous play, in which history is set at naught, the manners of the times misconstrued, the characters of François I. and of Clément Marot dishonoured and reviled, wherein *hardly* any beautiful lines shine to redeem the emptiness of the conception, the absence of clever conduct, the absolute want of interest: where, in short, the horrible and ignoble and immoral are all mixed up together in a chaotic confusion."

Well, monsieur critic, are you satisfied? Are you being well avenged at the expense of the man of genius? Have you trodden his dramas sufficiently under foot, as Triboulet trod on the corpse of the person he thought his enemy? No! You begin your monologue again. Ah! it seems short to you, does it not? because it is one of hatred.[2] Proceed then! the hatred of the petty for the great is not groundless, and at all times, as Triboulet shows us with regard to the king, and as you exhibit with regard to the drama, such hatred ever yearns to slay.

"At the first performance," adds the critic, "a scandal was caused by the crazy and *tumultuous admirers* who, at each hiss that was raised, shouted, 'Down with the idiots!

[1] See Appendix. [2] *Ibid.*

Put the brutes out!' It was a large, well-drilled cohort of friends who were sent into the theatre before the proper hour, and they applauded to excess all that the public thought truly disgusting. Notwithstanding this, and in spite of this extraordinary *claque*, the hissing was strong enough for the name of M. Victor Hugo to be flung out amidst the tumult. In spite of this startling failure, a second performance was announced for Thursday. Compared with this, *Hernani* is a genuine masterpiece . . ." (Ah! monsieur critic, if we had but the time how we would like to read what you said about *Hernani*!) "and Boileau's epigram against Corneille might be applied to M. Victor Hugo.

"'Après l'*Agésilas*,
Hélas!
Mais, après l'*Attila*,
Holà!'"

Do you not think these four lines of Boileau against the author of the *Cid*, of *Cinna* and of *Polyeucte* were among the unworthy things he wrote? But Boileau at least confined himself to denouncing the plays of old Corneille as weak: he did not denounce them to the police as immoral. Then, with great satisfaction, the critic ends up his article in these words—

"We learn to-night that the ministre des travaux publics has given orders to stop the performance of the play."

Now let us follow the drama of our friend Victor Hugo before the Tribunal de Commerce, as we have followed it on the stage of the Théâtre-Richelieu, only let the author himself speak. M. Victor Hugo's prose is much better than mine, consequently my readers will have no ground for complaint.

"The appearance of this drama at the theatre gave rise to an unprecedented ministerial act. The day after the first performance, the author received from M. Jouslin de la Salle, stage manager of the Théâtre-Français, the

following note, the original copy of which he preserves most preciously—

"'It is half-past ten and I have just received the *order* to suspend the performance of *Le Roi s'amuse*. M. Taylor has sent me the order on behalf of the Government.

"'*23 November.*'

"The first impulse of the author was to doubt it. The act was arbitrary to the point of incredibility. In fact, what is called the *Charte-Vérité* says, 'The French have the right of *publishing* . . .' Note that the text does not merely say the *right of printing*, but, large and clear, the *right of publishing*. Now, the theatre is only another means of publication, like the press, like sculpture or lithography. The liberty of the theatre is, therefore, implicitly indited in the Charter with every other form of liberty of thought. The law adds fundamentally, 'The censorship can never be re-established.' Now, the text does not say the *censorship of newspapers or of books*, it says *censorship* in general, all censure, that of the theatres as well as of writings. The theatre cannot, then, henceforth be legally censured.

"Besides, the Charter says, 'Confiscation is abolished.' Now, the suppression of a theatrical play after representation is not merely a monstrous act of censorship and arbitrariness, it is confiscation out and out, it is the violent robbery of a property belonging to the theatre and the author.

"Finally, to make all plain and clear, to preserve the four or five great special principles which the French Revolution has cast in bronze intact on their granite pedestals, in order that they cannot surreptitiously attack the common right of the French with forty thousand ancient damaged arms which rust and disuse have eaten away in the arsenal of our laws, the Charter, in a final article, expressly abolishes all that which in laws anterior to it would be contrary to its wording and its spirit. This is explicit. The ministerial suppression of a theatrical play attacks its liberty through the censorship, and its copyright through confiscation. Our whole sense of public right rises in revolt against such a method of procedure. The author, unable to believe in such insolence and folly, rushed to the theatre. There, the fact was con-

firmed, in every particular. The Government had, indeed, notified the *order* in question, by its divine right of governance. It had no reasons to offer. It had taken his play, deprived him of his right and seized his property. There was but one thing more to do to the poet—to put him into the Bastille.

"We repeat, at the time we are living, when such an act comes and bars your way and lays hands on you roughly, the first feeling is one of profound surprise. A thousand questions occur to your mind—Where is justice, where is right? Can such things really happen? Was there, indeed, such a thing as the July Revolution? It is evident we are no longer in Paris! In what pachalic do we live?

"The Comédie-Française, stupefied and struck with consternation, wished to try some advances towards the Government to obtain the revocation of this strange decision, but its labour was in vain. The divan, . . . I mean the council of ministers, had met during the day. On the 23rd, it was an order from the Government—the same on the 24th. On the 23rd, the play was only suspended; on the 24th, it was definitely forbidden. The theatre was even enjoined to erase the four dreadful words '*Le Roi s'amuse.*' The unlucky Théâtre-Français was, moreover, instructed that it was not to complain or to breathe a word. It may be fine, loyal and noble to resist such Asiatic despotism; but theatres dare not do it. The fear of the withdrawal of their privileges makes them serfs and slaves, liable to taxation and statute-labour at the mercy of eunuchs and the dumb.

"An author should be and remain a stranger to these theatrical proceedings. He, a poet, does not depend upon any Government. His duty as a free writer forbids him to make the entreaties and solicitation he might make if he meanly consulted his own interests. But to ask for grace from a power is to admit that power. Liberty and ownership are not matters for antechamber settlement. A right does not solicit like a favour. For a favour he must beseech the Government; but for a right he appeals to the country. He must, then, go to the country for redress. There are two ways of obtaining justice: public opinion and the law courts. He chose both. The case

is already judged and won in the eyes of public opinion. Here the author must warmly thank all thoughtful and independent persons connected with literature and the arts, who showed him on that occasion many proofs of sympathy and cordiality. He reckoned upon their support in anticipation. He knows that, when it is a question of struggling for liberty of intellect and thought, he will not go singly to battle.

"Let us say, in passing, that the ruling power, with very mean-spirited calculation, prided itself it would have on that occasion, as its auxiliaries, the literary passions that have for a long period raged round the author. Literary hatreds the author supposed were even more tenacious than political animosities, seeing the former have their root in *amour propre*, and the latter simply in principles. The Government is mistaken. Its brutal act has disgusted right-thinking men in all camps. There rallied round the author to oppose arbitrariness and injustice those even who a little time before had attacked him the most violently. If, by chance, a few inveterate haters persisted, they have since regretted the momentary support they gave to the Government. Every honourable and loyal man amongst the author's enemies stretched out hands to him, even though ready to begin the literary battle again as soon as the political fight is at an end. In France, whoever he is who is persecuted, his sole enemy is the persecutor.

"So, now, having settled that the Government's act is detestable, unjustifiable, impossible in right, we will condescend for a moment to discuss it as a material fact, and try to find of what elements it would seem to have been composed. To this end, the first question which presents itself is one which everybody will put—What can be the motive for such a measure?

"Certainly, if we deign to condescend for one moment to accept the ridiculous fiction that, in this instance, it is the care of public morals which moves our rulers, and that, shocked by the condition of licence into which certain theatres have fallen during the last six years, they wished at last, urged to extreme measures, to make an example, in the teeth of all laws and rights, of one work and writer, the choice of the work would, it must be confessed, be a

singular one, but the choice of the author would be no less strange. In fact, who is the man that this short-sighted power attacks so strangely? A writer so placed that, though his talent may be contested by everybody, his character is called in question by no one. He is a man of avowed, proved and established character, a rare and valuable thing in these days. A poet who was the first to be disgusted with the licence to which the theatres were yielding; who, eighteen months ago, upon the rumour that the inquisition of theatres was going to be illegally re-established, went himself personally, with several other dramatic authors to warn the Government that it ought to guard against such a measure; and who there openly urged for a repressive law to regulate the excesses off the stage, whilst yet protesting against the censorship in such severe words that the Government is very sure not to forget them. He is an artist devoted to art, who has never sought success by ignoble means, who has been accustomed all his life to look the public straight in the face; a sincere and temperate man who has already fought more than one battle for liberty and against despotism; who, in 1829, in the last year of the Restoration, rejected everything which the Government then offered him in compensation for the interdict laid on *Marion Delorme*, and who, more than a year later, in 1830, after the revolution of July, refused, in spite of the advantages to his material interests, to allow that same *Marion Delorme* to be played, because it might have been made the occasion of attack and insult against the fallen king, who had proscribed it; a very simple line of conduct, no doubt, that every man of honour would have followed under similar circumstances, but which, perhaps, might have rendered him henceforth inviolate from all censure, and about which he wrote himself in 1831 as follows: 'Successes gained by hunting out scandals and by making political allusions hardly pleased him.' He admits that 'such success is worth but little and is short-lived. It is precisely when there is no public censorship that authors should criticise one another, honestly and conscientiously. In this way, they will exalt the dignity of art: when people have entire liberty it is desirable to keep within due bounds.'

"Now, that the supposed immorality of the drama is reduced to nothing, now that all the display of evil and shameful arguments lies beneath our feet, now is the time to point out the true motive of the measure, the motive behind the scenes in the Court, and the motives they do not give because they dare not admit them among themselves, and therefore have carefully concealed them beneath a pretext. This motive has already transpired among the outside public and the public has guessed it correctly. We will say no more about it. It is probably of service to our cause that we should set our adversaries the example of courtesy and of moderation. It is good that the lesson of dignity and wisdom be set the Government by a private individual, by him who is persecuted to the body which is persecuting him. Though we are not of the number of those who think to cure their own wounds by poisoning the wounds of others, it is but too true that there is, in the third act of this play, a line where the untoward sagacity of some familiars of the palace discovered an allusion (I ask you myself where is this allusion?), of which neither the public nor the author had thought until then, but which, when proclaimed in this fashion, becomes the cruellest and most deadly of insults. It is all too true that this line was enough to cause the order to be given for the playbills of the Théâtre-Français to be taken down, in order that the curiosity of the public should not again be afforded the sight of that little seditious phrase, *le Roi s'amuse*. We will not quote the line which is such a red rag to a bull; furthermore, we will not point it out unless we are pushed to the last extremity, and people are imprudent enough to make us take our stand upon it in self-defence. We will not revive old historic scandals. We will spare as far as possible an exalted personage the consequences of the thoughtlessness of his courtiers. It is possible to be generous in warfare even to a king. We mean to be so. Only, let those in power consider the inconvenience of having as friend a bear, as it were, who crushes with the pavingstone of censorship the imperceptible allusions which happen to cross their minds. We are not even sure that we do not feel some sympathy for the ministry itself. To tell the truth, the whole thing inspires us with great pity. The Government of

July is new-born, it is only thirty months old and still in its infancy, with the puerile passions of childhood. Is it, indeed, worth while to spend much virile anger against it? When it is full-grown, then we will see.

"Meantime, to look at the question for a moment from the individual point of view, the censorial confiscation under consideration perhaps causes more injury to the author of this drama than of any other. In fact, for the fourteen years he has been writing, not one of his works but has had the unfortunate distinction of being chosen as a battlefield upon its appearance, and disappeared after a more or less lengthy period in the dust and smoke and turmoil of a battle. Therefore, when he produces a play for the theatre, the most important thing to him of all, as he cannot expect a quiet audience after the first night, is a series of performances. If it happens on the first day that his voice is drowned in uproar, that his idea is not understood, the following days may correct the first one. *Hernani* had fifty-three performances, *Marion Delorme* had sixty-one; *Le Roi s'amuse*, thanks to ministerial violence, only had one. The injustice done the author is assuredly great. Who can give him back intact at the point he left off, the third experiment, so important to him? Who can tell him what might have occurred after the first performance? Who can give him back the public of the morrow, a public ordinarily impartial and without friends or enemies, the public which teaches the poet and which the poet instructs?

"We are at a curious period of political transition. One of those moments of general lassitude when all kinds of despotic acts are possible in society, even the most advanced ideas of emancipation and of liberty. France advanced rapidly in July 1830; she did three good days' work then; she made three great oases in the field of civilisation and of progress. Now, many are harassed, many are out of breath, many demand a halt. They want to keep back the energetic spirits who are not tired, but still press on; they wish to wait for the laggards who have stopped behind and give them time to catch up. Hence, a strange fear of everything that moves and talks and thinks. It is an odd situation, easily defined. They are all the elements which are afraid of ideas; the league of interests clashing

with the movement of theories begins, and takes fright at systems: the merchant who wants to sell; the street which is frightened of the counting-house; the armed shop on the defensive.

"In our opinion, the Government takes unfair advantage of this disposition to repose, this fear of fresh revolutions. It has come to petty tyranny. It does wrong towards itself and towards us. If it thinks there is indifference now in people's minds towards liberty of ideas, it is mistaken; it is only lassitude. It will demand severe account some day of all the illegal actions that have been accumulating for some time past. What a dance it has led us! Two years ago, one feared for order; now, one trembles for liberty! Questions of free thought, of intellect and of art are imperiously mowed down by the viziers of the King of the Barricades. It is profoundly sad to see how the revolution of July has ended, *mulier formosa supernè*.

"No doubt, if one only considered the slight importance of the work of the author now in question, the ministerial measure which has smitten it down is not a great matter. It is but a malicious little literary *coup d'état* whose only merit is that of not spoiling the series of arbitrary acts of which it forms a part. But, if we look higher, we see that this affair is not merely one that affects a drama and a poet, but, as we said at first, both liberty and the rights of ownership are involved in the question. Great and serious interests are involved in it, and, although the author be compelled to deal with this important affair by a simple commercial lawsuit at the Théâtre-Français, not being able to attack the Government directly, barricaded behind the principles of non-receivers of State advice, he hopes that his cause will be regarded as a great one in the eyes of all when he takes it to the bar of the Consular tribunal, with liberty in his right hand and proprietorship in his left. He will himself speak of the need for the independence of his art. He will plead his right resolutely with gravity and simplicity, without personal animosity, and yet, at the same time, fearlessly. He counts upon the concurrence of all, upon the free and cordial support of the press, on the justice of opinion and on the equity of the courts. He has no doubt he will be

successful. The state of siege will be raised in literary precincts as in political.

"When that is done, and he has secured his liberty as poet and as citizen intact, inviolable and sacred, he will peaceably return to his life's work, from which he has been violently torn away, which he would like never to have had to leave. He has his duty to do, he knows, and nothing will distract him from it. For the moment, the political rôle has come to him: he has not sought it out, but he accepts it. Surely the power which attacks us will not have gained much, in forcing us who are artists to quit our conscientious, tranquil, honest, serious task, our sacred task, a task which belongs to the past and to the future, in order to mix ourselves indignant and angry with the irreverent and scoffing audience which, for the last fifteen years, has watched the various poor devils of political bunglers as they pass by hooting and whistling, thinking they are building up a social edifice because they go daily, at great trouble to themselves, sweating and panting, to cart heaps of legal schemes from the Tuileries to the Palais-Bourbon and from the Palais-Bourbon to the Luxembourg!

30 *November* 1832."

On 19 December 1832, the matter came before the Tribunal de Commerce. All the artist world of Paris gathered together in the Salle de la Bourse, surprised to find itself in such good company. After his barrister had spoken, Victor Hugo rose and made the following speech:—

"Gentlemen, after the eloquent orator[1] who so generously lends me the powerful assistance of his speech, I should have nothing to say if I did not believe it my duty not to let pass the daring, culpable act which has violated our public rights through my person without a solemn and serious protest. This is not an ordinary cause, gentlemen. It seems to some persons, at the first glance, to be only a simple commercial action, a claim for indemnity for the non-execution of a private contract—in a word, simply the lawsuit of an author against a theatre. No, gentlemen, it is more than that, it is the lawsuit of a

[1] M. Odilon Barrot.

citizen against a government. The basis of this matter is a play forbidden *by order*; now, a play forbidden by order is censorship and the Charter abolished censorship; a play forbidden by order is confiscation. Your sentence, if favourable to me, and, it seems to me, I do you wrong to doubt it, will be to lay the blame manifestly, although indirectly, at the door of censorship and confiscation.

"You see, gentlemen, how the horizon of this cause lifts and widens. I plead here for something higher than my own interest, I plead for my rights in general, for my right to think, and to possess, that is to say, for the common right due to all. Mine is a general cause, as is absolute equity yours. The minor details of the case are lost sight of before the question thus put. I am not simply a writer, you are not merely consular judges. Your conscience confronts mine. At this tribunal, you represent a great idea, and I, at the bar, stand for another. Your seat is justice; mine, liberty. Now, justice and liberty are made to be heard. Liberty is right, and justice is free.

"This is not the first time that M. Odilon Barrot has told you before me, gentlemen, that the Tribunal of Commerce has been called upon to condemn, without departing from its jurisdiction, the arbitrary acts of those in authority. The first tribunal to declare the ordinances of 25 July 1830 illegal has been forgotten by no one, it was the Tribunal of Commerce. You, gentlemen, will follow that memorable precedent, and, although the question is much smaller, you will uphold right to-day as you upheld it then; you will, I hope, listen to what I have to say to you with sympathy; you will warn the Government by your sentence, that it is on a bad path, and is wrong to degrade art and thought; you will give me back my rights and property; you will brand the police and censorship on the brow, who came by night to steal my liberty and my property from me by breaking the Charter.

"What I say here I say without anger, the reparation I demand of you I ask with due gravity and moderation. God forbid I should spoil the beauty and rectitude of my cause by violent words! He who has right on his side has strength, and the strong scorn violence.

"Yes, gentlemen, right is on my side. M. Odilon Barrot's admirable argument has victoriously proved to

you that the ministerial act which has forbidden *Le Roi s'amuse*, is arbitrary, illegal and unconstitutional. It is in vain for them to attempt to revive a law of the Reign of Terror by attributing the censorship to authority, a law which commands in clear terms the theatres to play the tragedies of *Brutus* and of *Wilhelm Tell* three times per week, only to give republican plays, and to stop representations of all work which tends, I quote word for word, '*to deprave the public mind and to awaken the shameful superstition of royalty*.' Gentlemen, dare the actual supporters of the new royalty indeed invoke such a law, and invoke it against *Le Roi s'amuse*? Is it not evidently abrogated in its text as in its spirit? Made for the Terror, it died with the Terror. Is it not the same with all imperious decrees by which, forsooth, officials will have the right not merely to censure theatrical works, but the power of sending an author to prison according to its own good pleasure without trial? Do such things exist nowadays? Was not all this irregular and haphazard legislation solemnly done away with by the Charter of 1830? We appeal to the solemn oath of 9 August. The France of July did not reckon for either conventional or imperial despotism. The Charter of 1830 did not allow itself to be gagged either by 1807 or by '93.

"Liberty of thought in all its various methods of expression, at the theatre as in the press, in the pulpit as in the tribune, there, gentlemen, lies one of the fundamental principles of our public rights. No doubt each of these modes of expression needs an organic law in accord with the fundamental law, a law of good faith, repressive but not preventive, which, leaving each career at liberty, shall imprison licence under strict penal laws. The theatre in particular as a public place, we are anxious to declare, does not know how to protect itself from the legal surveillance of the municipal authority. Well, gentlemen, this law, easier to make, probably, than is commonly supposed, which each of us dramatic poets has probably constructed in his own mind more than once, is wanting, and is not created. Our ministers, who produce year in year out from seventy to eighty laws per session, have not deemed it fitting to make such a one as this. A law for theatres did not seem urgently

needed. Not urgent, when it concerns the liberty of thought, the progress of civilisation, public morality, the reputation of families, the tranquillity of Paris, which means that of France, and, indeed, the tranquillity of Europe itself!

"A law affecting the liberty of theatres ought to have been proclaimed since 1830, in the spirit of the new Charter, but it is still wanting, I repeat, through the fault of the Government. Past legislation has evidently fallen away, and all the sophistries with which they plaster its ruins will not build it up again. So, between a law which no longer exists and one which is still needed, the authorities do not possess the right to stop a play at a theatre. I will not linger over what M. Odilon Barrot has demonstrated so supremely well.

"Here an objection of secondary importance arises which I am, however, going to discuss. True, such a law is needed, people will say, but in the absence of legislation, ought authority to be completely defenceless? Might there not appear suddenly on the stage one of those infamous pieces—evidently made on purpose to make money and scandal—where all that is sacred in religion and morality and in the heart of man is insolently scoffed at and ridiculed; where all that goes to make the peace of family life and of citizenship is held up to question; where even living personages are pilloried on the stage amidst the hootings of the multitude? Do not State reasons lay upon the Government the duty of closing the theatre to such monstrous work, in spite of the silence of law? I do not know, gentlemen, if such a type of work has even been produced, and I do not wish to know, or to believe it, and I will not accept here, in any degree whatever, the task of denouncing them; but, even in such a case, I declare, whilst deploring the scandal caused, and realising that others would advise the State to stop works of this kind immediately, and at once to demand the Chambers for a bill of indemnity, I would not relax the strictness of the principle. I would say to the Government: See the consequences of your negligence to create a law so pressingly needed as a law affecting theatrical liberty! You have done this wrong, repair it and hasten to ask the Chambers for penal legislation, and, meantime, pursue

the guilty drama with the code of the press, which, until special laws be made will, in my opinion, rule all public fashions. I say, in my opinion, for this is but my own personal view. My illustrious defender would, I know, only allow liberty to theatres with greater restrictions than I should; I speak here not with the opinion of a lawyer, but with the simple common sense of the citizen; if I am wrong, do not let my words be laid to the account of my defender, but at my own door solely. I repeat it, gentlemen, I would not relax the strictness of the principle; I would not grant the ruling authorities the power to confiscate liberty even in a case, apparently, where it was legitimate, for fear a day would come when it would confiscate it in all cases; I think that to repress scandal by arbitration is to create two scandals in place of one, and I say with an eloquent and serious-minded man who must shudder to-day at the way in which his disciples apply his doctrines: '*Il n'y a pas de droit au-dessus du droit*' ('There is no right over right').

"Now, gentlemen, if such an abuse of power, exercised even upon a licentious, impudent or defamatory work would have been inexcusable, how much more so when it fastens upon a work of pure art, when it picks out for proscription among all the plays which have been produced for the last two years, a serious composition, strict in its morality? And that is precisely what the left-handed power which governs us has done in stopping *Le Roi s'amuse*. M. Odilon Barrot has proved to you that it has acted without justice; I will prove that it has acted without reason.

"The motives that those who are in with the police have been whispering abroad for some days to explain the prohibition of this play are of three kinds: there is the moral reason, the political reason and—we must say the words though they be laughable—the literary reason. Vergil relates that several ingredients went to make up the thunder which Vulcan made for Jupiter. The petty ministerial thunder which has struck my play, which the censorship had forged for the police, is made up of three bad reasons rolled up, intermingled and united, *tres imbris torti radios*.

"There is, first of all, or, rather, there was, the moral

reason. Yes, gentlemen, I swear it, because it seems incredible, the police made out at first that *Le Roi s'amuse* was, I quote the actual expression, 'an *immoral play*.' I have already silenced the police on that point. In publishing *Le Roi s'amuse*, I declared openly, not for the benefit of the police, but for those honourable men who wished to read me, that the drama was profoundly and strictly moral. No one has disbelieved me and no one will, it is my profound conviction as an honest man. All the precautions the police for a time succeeded in raising against the morality of this work have disappeared at the time I am now speaking. Four thousand copies of the book issued to the public have pleaded this trial in their own way, and these four thousand advocates have won their cause. In such a matter, also, an affirmative is sufficient; I shall not, therefore, enter upon a superfluous discussion. Only, for the sake of the future as well as the past, I would have the police to know, once for all, that I do not write immoral works. Let this be taken as conclusive, for I shall not return to it again.

"After the moral argument there comes the political. Here, gentlemen, as I can only express the same ideas in other terms, allow me to quote you a page from the preface I put to the drama . . ." (We have ourselves laid that page of preface before our readers.)[1]

"After moral and political reasons, come the literary. A Government stopping a play for literary reasons is a strange thing, but it is not, however, without foundation. You remember—if by chance it was worth your trouble to remember it—that, in 1829, at the period when the first works called *romantic* appeared upon the stage, about the time when the Comédie-Française received *Marion Delorme*, a petition signed by seven persons was presented to King Charles X. to demand that the Théâtre-Français be closed by the king, simply to the works of what was called the *New School*. Charles took it laughingly, and replied wittily that in literary questions he had only *his place* in the *pit of the theatre* like the rest of us. The petition collapsed beneath ridicule. Well, gentlemen, to-day many of the signers of this petition are deputies, influential deputies belonging to the majority,

[1] See Appendix.

having a share in the governmental powers and voting for the budget. What they timidly petitioned for in 1829, they are able, all-powerful as they are, to carry out in 1832.

"Public rumour, in fact, says that it was they who, the day after the first performance, approached the minister at the Chamber of Deputies and obtained a promise from him under the most moral and politic excuses imaginable, that *Le Roi s'amuse* should be stopped. The minister, an ingenuous, innocent and candid man, bravely took up the challenge; he could not distinguish beneath all those wrappings the direct and personal animosity; he believed he was performing a political proscription. I am sorry for him, they made him execute a literary proscription. I will not say more on this point. . . . It inspires me with infinitely less anger than pity; it is odd, that is all. The Government lending assistance to the Academy in 1832! Aristotle become the law of the State once more! An imperceptible literary revolution being carried on at the brink of, and in the midst of, our great political revolutions! The deputies who deposed Charles x. working in a tiny corner to restore Boileau! How despicable! . . .

"Gentlemen, I will sum up. By stopping my play, the Government has not, on the one hand, an article of law to quote from; on the other, not a single valuable reason to give. This measure has two aspects, both equally bad: as law, it is arbitrary; as reasoning, it is absurd. What, then, can the power which has neither reason nor law on its side allege as its motives? Its caprice, fancy, desire —that is to say, nothing!

"You will do justice, gentlemen, to that desire, fancy, caprice. Your sentence, by giving me the case, will inform the country of this business—which is but small as compared with the greatness of the ordinance of July—what *force majeure* there is in France besides that of the law, and that at the basis of this trial there is an illegal order which the Government did wrong to issue, and the theatre was wrong to obey; your sentence will teach the powers that its very friends blame it candidly on this occasion; that the rights of every citizen are to be respected by all Governments, that, given the conditions of order and of general safety are fulfilled, the theatre ought to be respected like other means of expression of public

thought, and that, whether it be the press, the tribune or the theatre, none of the loopholes for the escape of liberty of intellect can be closed without peril. I address myself to you with profound faith in the worthiness of my cause. I shall never be afraid under similar occasions of grappling with a ministry hand to hand; the law courts are the natural judges of honourable duels of pure right against arbitrary dealings, duels less unequal than people think; for if, on the one side, there is a whole Government, and, on the other, only a simple citizen, that simple citizen is, indeed, strong when he can bring an illegal act before your bar, ashamed of being thus exposed to public view and public scourging, and confronting it as I am doing with four articles from the Charter!

"I do not, however, disguise from myself that the present time is not like the latter years of the Restoration, when resistance to the encroachments of the Government was so much applauded and so popular. The ideas of stability and of authority are momentarily more in favour than those of progress and of freedom. It is a natural reaction after that rough revival of all our liberty at a rush styled the Revolution of 1830. But this reaction will not last long. Our ministers will some day be surprised by the implacable memory with which the men even who compose their majority then will recall all the grievances they seem to have forgotten so quickly to-day; moreover, let that day be late or soon in coming it will not matter: on that score I neither look for applause nor fear invective; I have but followed the strict monitions of my right and my duty.

"I ought to say here that I have strong reasons for believing that the Government will take advantage of this fleeting torpor of the public mind formally to re-establish the censorship, and my affair is but a prelude, a preparation, a step to a putting of all theatrical liberty outside general laws. By not making a repressive law, by purposely letting licence have free scope on the stage for the past two years, the Government imagines it has created, in the opinion of respectable men, who might be disgusted with that licence, a prejudice in favour of dramatic censorship. In my opinion it is mistaken, and the censorship will never be anything else in France

than an unpopular and illegal proceeding. As far as I myself am concerned, whether the censorship of the theatres be re-established by an illegal decree or an unconstitutional law, I declare I will never submit to such an act of authority without protesting; and I make such a protest solemnly now and here both for the present and for the future.

"Further, observe how wanting in greatness, openness and courage the Government has been in the series of arbitrary acts which have succeeded one another for some time past. It has slowly, subterraneously, surreptitiously, indirectly, tortuously undermined the beautiful though incomplete edifice which the revolution of July had reared. It always took us treacherously from behind when we least expected. It dared not censure my play before the representation; it stopped it the following day. It attacks our most vital liberties; it cavils at our best attained efforts; it bases its despotism on a heap of ancient worm-eaten and repealed laws; it lies in wait to rob us of our rights in that Forest of Bondy of imperial decrees, through which liberty never passes without being stripped. . . .

"I say it is for the probity of the law courts to stop its course, which is as dangerous to it as to us. I say that the ruling power is specially wanting in greatness and courage by the underhand manner in which it has performed this hazardous operation, which each Government in strange blindness attempts in its turn, and which consists in substituting, more or less rapidly, arbitrariness for the constitution, despotism for liberty.[1] . . . If it only continues for some time longer in this way, if the proposed laws are adopted, the confiscation of all our rights will be complete. To-day, they take away my liberty as a poet by censure: to-morrow, they will take away my liberty as a citizen by a gendarme; to-day, they banish me from the theatre: to-morrow, they will banish me from the country; to-day, they stop my mouth: to-morrow, they will transport me; to-day, the state of siege is in literature: to-morrow, it will be in citizenship; in liberties, guarantees, charters, public rights, in a word, annihilation!

"If the Government be not better advised by its own

[1] See Appendix.

interests to stop at the precipice while there is yet time, before long we shall have all the despotism of 1807 without its glory : we shall have the Empire without the Emperor. I have only a word more to say, gentlemen, and I desire it may be in your mind whilst you are deciding. There has been in this century but one great man, Napoleon, and but one great thing, liberty ! The great man is no more with us, let us try to have the great thing. V. HUGO."

Of course it goes without saying that the tribunal pronounced itself incompetent to deal with the case, and no justice at all was done to the poet.

CHAPTER II

Le Corsaire trial—The Duc d'Orléans as caricaturist—The *Tribune* trial—The right of association established by jury—Statistics of the political sentences under the Restoration—*Le Pré-aux-Clercs*

LET us return to the political trials which were a feature of the close of the year 1832. Of course, at this period, a political trial was thought more of than a literary one, and people were much more sure of being acquitted if they had conspired against the Government than if they had conspired against the Academy. The trial of the newspaper *Le Corsaire* followed that of *Le Roi s'amuse*, or even, I believe, preceded it. *Le Corsaire* was then republican; it had given an account of the 5th and 6th of June according to our point of view. It is an odd thing: every newspaper which supported the revolution in politics, supported the *statu quo* in literature. I will relate, shortly, my quarrel with Carrel. This is how the *Corsaire* had expressed itself. We quote only the passage which was impeached by the public prosecutor :—

" . . . The National Guard of the suburbs had arrived, and it was in the actual courtyard of the Tuileries itself that cartridges and brandy were distributed. All at once, the roar of firing was heard on the quai de la Mégisserie, in the rue Saint-Martin, by the Saint-Méry convent and [illegible] rue Montmartre and Saint-Honoré. Soon, cannon [illegible] in the[illegible]led with it, and, during this time, a considerable [illegible] intermin[illegible] soldiers went to various quarters of the city; [illegible] number beat the invitation to the citizens, but the greater [illegible] the dru[illegible]

mass of them listened unheeding and declined Civil War. One part of the city was barricaded. A royal parade had taken place. The King of the French and his son the Duc de Nemours, accompanied by M. de Montalivet, sword in hand, and by M. d'Argout, provided with the crutch he had not discarded since his last illness, as the ministerial newspapers grotesquely put it, had gone through the boulevards and returned by the quays. More than fifteen hundred cavalry escorted the king. Meantime, blood was shed in the quartier Saint-Martin. The National Guard of the district showed an excitement of which it was difficult thoroughly to understand the cause; the firing did not cease; more than forty thousand men were in action. . . ."

This article was prosecuted for provoking to rebellion. As can be seen, it was not amiably disposed to the July Government, and the question ought, we think, to have been put in an entirely different way. Had the attacked Government the right of defending itself? Without a doubt it had. Had it the right to distribute brandy and cartridges in the Tuileries courtyard? Certainly! Had we not indeed seen M. de Rumigny distributing powder and shot and wine at the Palais-Royal on 31 July and 1 August, on the morning of the parade of Rambouillet? Yes; but then the action was sympathetic and approved, whilst, to-day, there was immense opposition organised against Louis-Philippe, and all his actions were blamed, even those of legitimate defence. . . . They attacked the king, they attacked the princes, they attacked the ministers: this had all been well done and well received.

Philippon, the witty editor of the *Journal pour rire*, had conceived the idea of depicting Louis-Philippe in the shape of a *pear*: all the walls of Paris were covered with this grotesque likeness. He published the journal *La Caricature*, to which Decamps contributed some of his early drawings, and *La Caricature* was a tremendous success. Every one, even the Duc d'Orléans, had a hand in it. We know that the prince could draw cleverly and with originality and that he also engraved. I still possess drawings

and engravings by him. He was a pupil of Fielding, and drew animals with great skill. One day, an idea for a caricature came into his head, inspired by the daily quips which the Chamber made at his father : it was to draw the king as Gulliver and the deputies as Lilliputians. The king was laid full length asleep, bound and gagged, with all the Lilliputian population about him, taking advantage of his enforced immobility to feel him over and examine him. A host of episodes each funnier than the others sprang out of the first idea. M. Jacques Lefebvre, the banker, was rolling a 5-franc piece towards the effigy of King Louis-Philippe with the same amount of exertion as a wheelwright rolls a wheel. M. Humann, Minister of Finance—so far as I can recollect—at that time, and consequently, supervisor of the excise duties, was plunged up to the knees in the powder so strongly appreciated by Sganarelle, and sneezing fit to shake his head off. M. Ganneron, who had made his fortune in tallow, came forward candle in hand towards the bridge made by Gulliver's half-open breeches, less courageous than the Comte Max Edmond of the *Burgraves*, and uncertain whether he might venture into the darkness of the cavern. M. Thiers and M. Guizot, who already disputed power between them, had each stretched a rope from the fobs of the king's waistcoat, and advanced each with scales in hand towards the two royal fobs which bore the titles of *Ministère de l'intérieur* and *Ministère des affaires Étrangères* ; M. Thiers's scales were labelled *Libéralisme* and M. Guizot's *Réaction*. M. Molé and M. Dupin were playing on a see-saw. All these Lilliputians were as lifelike as possible. We need not speak of the king, who was eight to ten inches in length and a perfect portrait. But this is the most curious part of the story.

The Duc d'Orléans had obtained his stones from the lithographic office of Motte, father-in-law of our dear friend Achille Devéria. They forgot to say that this piece of lithography, not being intended for the public,

did not need to be deposited with the Ministère de l'intérieur : the head workman did the thing in all conscientiousness and sent in a proof to the Ministère de l'intérieur ; it was signed F.O., the duke's usual signature, for Ferdinand d'Orléans. It need hardly be said that the print was not only forbidden publication, but taken to the king.

The king recognised his son's signature! We can comprehend the paternal dressing-down His Royal Highness received. Honourable amends were made : the lithographer scratched out the head, and, instead of that of the Chief of the State, put the first head that came into his mind.

In 1834, the Duc d'Orléans gave me two copies of this caricature, one *before the head was scratched out* and one *after* ; I was stupid enough to let myself be robbed of both. If the Duc d'Orléans were still living, I had only to ask him for others, and I did not then realise the price they were worth. This digression is intended to convey an idea of the sort of opposition that was raised at that period.

Le Corsaire, then, was prosecuted for provoking to rebellion. The jury retired to deliberate for form's sake, but soon came out and pronounced the manager of the *Corsaire* not guilty. The trial of *La Tribune* succeeded that of the *Corsaire*. M. Bascans was acquitted as M. Viennot had been. Then came the affair of the *right of association*. Nineteen members of the Society of Friends of the People were summoned before the juries of the second court. They were accused of having been leaders and administrators of a political meeting of over twenty persons. This was quite a different matter from the two preceding acquittals! After three quarters of an hour's deliberation, M. Fenet, foreman of the jury, read this declaration—

" *Re the first question.*—' Has there been an association gathering on fixed days to discuss politics ? '—' Yes,'

"*Re the second question.*—'Did those gatherings take place without authorisation from the Government?'—'Yes.'

[After these two affirmations everybody believed of course that the accused were certain to be found guilty.]

"*Re the third question.*—Are the accused guilty?'—'No.'"

The whole court broke into applause. Thus the *right of association* was established by jury. People were beginning to grow sick of political sentences. Statistics had just been published giving the list of those sentenced during the Restoration: the Bourbons of the Elder Branch had in fifteen years cut off *a hundred and eighteen heads* and sentenced fourteen *contumacious persons*; it had condemned seventeen to penal servitude with hard labour, nineteen to a term of penal servitude; seventy-two to transportation, eighteen to imprisonment, thirty-five to temporary banishment. In conclusion, the general total of sentences, whether heavy or light, from death penalty to supervision, mounted to *two thousand four hundred and sixty-six*! In the midst of all these events, on 12 December Hérold produced a masterpiece: *Le Pré-aux-Clercs*.

Art is a king which walks smilingly through revolutions, looking down with contempt on all the upheavals it survives.

CHAPTER III

Victor Jacquemont

AS this blood-stained year 1832 drew to a close, in which cholera alone had deducted from the population of France a tithe of ninety-five thousand deaths, the authorities of Bombay were mourning the death of Victor Jacquemont, a young savant of the highest distinction. Being a scholar, Victor Jacquemont detested men of imagination; he particularly hated us dramatists. He had left France in 1828 before the great literary movement which ensued, and he only judged of it by the leading articles in the newspapers.

"It is all in bad taste!" he said, in one of his letters, which a *friend* of mine showed me with the usual eagerness one's friends have for thrusting such kinds of stuff under one's nose. "In laying aside the Greeks and Romans, and the nobility of our old theatres, we have not been happy in their successors."

He called us *messieurs de l'horrible*. Poor Jacquemont! I hardly knew him; I saw him once at General La Fayette's, who treated him like a son. The famous old man had a sure instinct for friendship: all who became great later were honoured by his friendship or protection.

The death of Jacquemont hardly made any impression in France; he was totally unknown by his compatriots; his reputation dated from the posthumous publication of his works, and especially of his private correspondence, which every cultured man has read. I say cultured man, for there are no more inveterate hunters-out of

talent than your man of culture. Now there is real wit at the bottom of Jacquemont's correspondence, although it is of a dry and sceptical type. As for belief, that is another matter altogether; he evidently doubted everything, even God. In his last letters to his family, he does not express a word of hope for another life; the immortality of the soul, with Jacquemont, is not even as much as a dream. The letter in which he bids farewell to his brother, and, through his brother, to the whole family, is full of despair. I will not say that there is no resignation in it, but it reads like the work of an unconcerned person. Jacquemont talks of himself in it as he would speak of a casual acquaintance. Put the letter into the third person; let the dying man substitute *he* for *I*, and you have the official announcement of the death of a stranger, made by an indifferent person. See if the letter is that of a man dying four thousand leagues from his country:

"BOMBAY, INVALID OFFICERS' QUARTERS,
"1 *December* 1832

"DEAR PORPHYRE,—I came here ill thirty-two days ago, and for thirty-one I have been in bed. In the poisonous forests of the isle of Salsette, exposed to the burning sun during the most unhealthy season, I caught the germs of the disease, attacks of which I have often felt since my journey to Adjmir, but I had disguised from myself their true nature. It is inflammation of the liver. The pestilential exhalations have done for me. As soon as my illness began, I made my will and put my affairs in order. My interests are entrusted to the honourable and friendly care of Mr. James Nicol, an English merchant here, and to M. Cordier at Calcutta. Mr. Nicol was my host on my arrival in Bombay. No old friend could have lavished more affectionate care upon me. Nevertheless, at the end of a few days, while I was still able to be transported, I left his house, which is in the fort, in order to occupy a convenient and spacious set of rooms in the quarter of the invalided officers, in a most airy and healthy situation by the seacoast, a hundred yards

from my doctor, Dr. MacLennan, the cleverest in Bombay, whose admirable care long since made him my very dear friend.

"The cruellest thought, dear Porphyre, when we are dying in a far country, for those who love us, is the idea of the loneliness and desertion in which we may be passing the last hours of our existence. Well, my dear fellow, you can find comfort in the assurance I give you that, since my arrival here, I have not ceased to be overwhelmed with the most affectionate and touching attentions of a number of good and kindly men. They come and see me constantly, humour my sick whims and forestall my every fancy. Mr. Nicol more than any one; Mr. John Box, a member of the Government; an old engineering colonel, Mr. Goodfellow; a very kind young officer, Major Mountain, and others still, whom I have not mentioned. The excellent MacLennan nearly risked his own health for my sake; for several days during a crisis which seemed likely to end fatally, he came twice each night. I have absolute confidence in his skill. At first, I suffered greatly; but for a long time I have been reduced to a state of weakness which is almost exempt from pain. The worst is that for thirty-one days I have not slept more than one hour in all. But these sleepless nights are very quiet ones, and do not seem desperately long.

"Happily, the disease is drawing to its close; it may not be fatal, although most probably it will. The abscess or abscesses formed since the first inside the liver, which, until a recent period, promised to disperse by absorption, seem to have increased, and bid fair shortly to open externally. All I desire is to escape quickly out of the wretched state in which I have been lingering for a month past, no matter by what means it be. My mind is perfectly clear, as you can see; it has only been rarely and temporarily clouded during several violent paroxysms of pain at the beginning of my illness. I have generally calculated upon the worst, so have never been unusually depressed. My end, should it come, looks sweet and peaceful. If you were here seated on my bed, with our father and Frédéric, I should be broken-hearted, and should not regard death with such serenity and resignation. Be comforted, and console our father;

console one another, my dear ones. But I am exhausted with this effort to write. I must bid you farewell! Farewell! . . . Oh! how your poor Victor loves you! Farewell for the last time! I can only write in pencil as I lie on my back. For fear the letters get rubbed out, the excellent Mr. Nicol will copy this letter in ink, so that I may be certain you will read my last thoughts.

" VICTOR JACQUEMONT

" I have been able to sign what the admirable Mr. Nicol has been so good as to copy. Farewell once more, my dear ones! "

Only one single sentence from the man's heart: " Farewell! Oh! how your poor Victor loves you! " It explains entirely why a literature full of sentiment must have been antipathetic to that cold, learned intellectual temperament.

Happily, two men undertook to send to the family, heart-broken by the unexpected loss far away from them, the melancholy consolations which the dying man had not thought of giving them. A dying man who knows he is beloved ought to console those whom he is going to leave as much as he can; he ought to have pity on those whom he causes to weep: hearts are cured by being softened, not by being turned to stone. The man who has wept much alone can appreciate the truth of what I say here.

This is Mr. James Nicol's letter to Jacquemont's brother. Mr. James Nicol is an Englishman, remember, and yet the letter is written in French, a tongue other than his own. But there is one universal language for the heart.

" BOMBAY, 17 *December* 1832

" MY DEAR SIR,—Although a stranger to you, fate has allotted it to me to communicate to you an event which you did not expect. It is with the deepest regret I am obliged to transmit to you your brother Victor's last letter,

and to communicate to you the sole consolation which is left to you, that of telling you of the peaceful and painless end he made on 17 December.

"Your brother came to my house on 29 October from Tanna, being in a very weak state of health, in consequence of an illness he had recently had, which he thought would speedily be cured by the sea breezes of this island, and his strength quickly restored. The evening of his arrival he took a walk of half a league with me, and, next day, paid various calls; but he came back early, thoroughly exhausted. I advised him to see a doctor at once; Dr. MacLennan saw him the same evening. I enclose in this letter for your satisfaction the account the doctor wrote of his illness. As your brother has himself told you, he suffered terribly at the beginning of his illness, and, from the first, he was informed of the dangerous nature of the disease. On 4 November he made his will, a copy of which I enclose herewith. About 8 November the disease appeared to take a favourable turn; and he still entertained the hope of recovering his health, when the formation of an abscess appeared. He then became daily weaker, but preserved throughout his illness a calm and contentedness I have never seen equalled. I left him on 6 December nearly in the same condition as on the preceding days, but without any symptoms of near dissolution. However, on the 7th, about three in the morning, he was seized with violent pains, which lasted for two hours. Dr. MacLennan was with him at the time. At five A.M. your brother sent for me: he was not suffering when I arrived; but a great change had taken place in his looks since the previous night, and I could hardly restrain my tears. Then, taking my hand, he said to me: 'Do not grieve; the time draws close, and my wishes are about to be fulfilled. I have been praying to heaven for it for the last fortnight. It is a happy release. Were I to live now the disease would probably make the rest of my life miserable. . . . Write to my brother, and tell how peacefully and happily my last days passed. . . .'

"He repeated to me that he wished me to send his manuscripts and collections to France, and went into the most elaborate details concerning his funeral arrangements,

which he wished to be celebrated with Protestant rites. He asked me to put up a simple gravestone with this inscription upon it—

'VICTOR JACQUEMONT
NÉ À PARIS LE 8 AOUT 1801
MORT À BOMBAY
APRÈS AVOIR VOYAGÉ PENDANT TROIS
ANS ET DEMI
DANS L'INDE'

During the course of the day he had several attacks of vomiting, and his breathing was considerably affected; but he kept the use of his faculties as perfectly as when in good health. He was only disquieted about his death, adding: 'I am very comfortable here, but I should be much better in my grave!' About five P.M. he said to me: 'I am now going to take my last drink from your hand, and then die.' A violent fit of vomiting ensued, and he was laid back in his bed completely exhausted. He opened his eyes at times, and until within twenty minutes before his death he seemed to recognise me. At sixteen minutes past six, he rendered up his spirit into the arms of death in his sleep.

"He was buried the following evening with military honours, as a member of the Légion d'honneur, and was followed by members of the Government, and by many other people.

"I feel the sincerest sympathy with you and your father in this irreparable loss. I only knew your brother during his illness, and only had the melancholy satisfaction of contributing to the best of my ability to his needs during his illness. In conformity with your brother's wishes, I have sent off by steamer with all possible care the articles of natural history which remained in my possession; they are packed in eleven cases and barrels, for which I enclose the invoice and bill of lading, signed by the captain of the French vessel, *La Nymphe* of Bordeaux. I wrote to the Commissaire Général de la Marine at Bordeaux, asking him to smooth

over any difficulties that might arise in connection with them. Be so good as to write to him about the things. I have also dispatched a box addressed to your father, containing all the writings your brother left with me.[1] I have put his Order of the Légion d'honneur, which your brother particularly instructed me to send you, in the case containing his papers. I also send you his watch and pistols. Be so good as to separate the catalogues belonging to the collections from the other writings, and send them to the Royal Museum. I have the honour to be, dear Sir, yours, etc. JAMES NICOL"

The epitaph drawn up by the dying man himself is terribly curt and dreary. The lost child called Antony would have found something more filial for his unknown mother than this philosopher for his. Besides the mother who bore us, is there not also the mother who receives us into her arms;—the everlasting grave as well as the temporary cradle? Ought not the arid and devouring climate of India to make the gentle land of his birth most precious to the sufferer?

Oh, violets and daisies which shall one day spring up on my grave, how I should regret you if I had to sleep my last sleep beneath the burning sands of Bombay! The soul may, perhaps, be but a dream; but the perfume of flowers is a reality.

To the letter of Mr. James Nicol was joined the account of Jacquemont's illness by Dr. MacLennan, the length of which we greatly regret prevents us from reproducing here;[2] it proves to what a point the excellent doctor had risked his own health, as the dying man had said. Nor were these the only tokens of sympathy which the family

[1] The whole of Victor Jacquemont's writings, and the description of the principal objects of natural history which the collections comprised, that he sent to the Natural History Museum of Paris, have been published by MM. Firmin Didot frères, under the title of *Voyage dans l'Inde*, 6 vols. in 4to, four of printed matter and two containing 290 plates and 4 maps (1841–44).

[2] The letter will be found in the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs of Dumas*, 1855, vol. vii.

of their famous dead received. MM. Cordier, Geoffroy-Saint-Hilaire and de Jussieu wrote the following letter to M. Jacquemont, the father :—

"PARIS, 21 *May* 1833

"SIR,—We have sympathised with the blow which has just struck you down too much not to feel a desire to associate ourselves with your grief, by bearing testimony to our own share in it. The administration of the Museum, which had entrusted your son with the mission he honourably fulfilled, and to which he has sacrificed his life, feels the cruel loss in a double capacity; it has lost in him a traveller in whom it placed complete reliance, and science has lost a naturalist of most brilliant promise.

"We are authorised to hope that, owing to the wise precautions he took during his last days, the fruits of the fatal journey will not be lost; that M. Victor Jacquemont's work will bear fruit and their results develop, though, doubtless, less brilliantly than as if under his own direction, yet in a sufficient manner to cause his efforts to be appreciated, both in actual accomplishment and as an example of what further work he would have done had he lived.

"You may rely upon it that nothing will be neglected on our part to attain to this end, and in order to give you the only real consolation which is left you.—We are, sir, etc.,

"*Les professeurs administrateurs du Muséum*
"CORDIER, Director
GEOFFROY-SAINT-HILAIRE
A. DE JUSSIEU"

As a matter of fact, all Victor Jacquemont's writings reached Paris safe and sound. I saw them in M. Guizot's hand once when I had been to ask his help in saving the life of a man under sentence of death, who was to be shot the next day. I wanted a word from M. Guizot to this end, and he wrote on a spare sheet from among Jacquemont's manuscripts. The man was saved; but I will tell the story in its proper place. That is how the name of Jacquemont perhaps occupies a more important place in my memory and in my Memoirs than it should.

CHAPTER IV

George Sand

NOW let us say a few words about the literary productions of the year 1832. We have seen its important theatrical works: *Teresa, Louis XI., Dix Ans de la vie d'une femme, Un duel sous Richelieu, La Tour de Nesle, Clotilde, Périnet Leclerc* and *Le Roi s'amuse.*

M. Lesur's Annual List, which sums up the year's work, complains of the *lack of productiveness* of those twelve months, which only produced TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVEN works, among which are the eight dramas above mentioned.

See what the chronologist says about the novels; his usual kindly inclination towards contemporary literature will be detected therein :—

"Romances multiply as fast as ever; they swarm everywhere and jostle one another in order to put before us an energetic display of trivialities: novels of manners, historical novels, psychological, physiological, pathological novels; tales and comic and fantastic stories of every sort and colour!"

Yes, Monsieur Lesur; and, among those abounding novels, we have, in fact, two masterpieces by Madame Sand, *Indiana* and *Valentine*, and one of Eugène Sue's best works, *La Salamandre.*

But let us deal first with Madame Sand, that hermaphrodite genius who combined the strength of a man with the grace of a woman; who, like the ancient sphinx,

the ever-mysterious enigma, crouched on the extreme borders of art with the face of a woman, the claws of a lion and the wings of an eagle. We will return afterwards to Eugène Sue.

Madame Sand came to Paris a short time before the Revolution of 1830. What did she come there to do? She will herself tell you with her accustomed frankness. Madame Sand wears a woman's clothes, but only as garments to cover her and not for purposes of concealment; of what use is hypocrisy when one possesses strength?

"A short time before the Revolution of 1830," says the authoress of *Indiana*, "I came to Paris with the object of finding occupation, not so much of a lucrative nature as a sufficiency. I had never worked except for pleasure; I knew in common with everybody else that *un peu de tout* meant *rien en somme*. I laid great stress on work which would permit me to remain in my own home. I did not know what to turn to. Drawing, music, botany, languages, history, I had nibbled at them all, and I regretted very much that I had not gone deeply into any of them; for, of all occupations, the one that attracted me least was to write for the public. It seemed to me that, apart from a rare talent for it, which I did not feel to possess, it was of less use than any other. I should, then, much have preferred a particular profession. I had often written for my own personal amusement. It appeared to me to be very impertinent to pretend to be able to amuse or interest other people, and nothing could have been less congenial to my reserved character, a dreamer, and eager for intimate friendships rather than for public exposure of one's most intimate thoughts. In addition to this, I knew my own language only very imperfectly. Educated on classical reading, I saw romanticism spreading everywhere. I had at first scoffed at it and rejected it from the solitudes of my own private corner, and from the depths of my inner conscience, but, when I acquired a taste for it, I became enthusiastic; my taste, which was then unformed, wavered between the past and the present, without knowing where to settle, liking both without knowledge and without seeking a means of reconciling them."

It is impossible better to describe the state of perplexity in which genius is placed during a certain period of life, drawn forward by faith and backward by doubt. Meanwhile, as the author of *Indiana* was then only twenty-five, and had to choose between the bread of independence and daily bread, she took up both painting on fans and painting portraits at 15 francs apiece and also wrote a novel. It was all very precarious work, the poorest transfer copies varnished over produced a greater effect than the young artist's water-colours; for 5 francs—and a better likeness than hers—the same portraits could be had which she sold for 15; finally, the novel seemed so poor to George Sand that she did not even attempt to turn it to account. However, she felt that her true vocation was literature, and she decided to consult some successful literary man.

There was at this period a *littérateur* in Paris of incontestable and almost uncontested genius, a writer of the first rank, at all events as regards originality. He had published various novels, and the most striking of them had obtained as strange a success as, at the present moment, *Ourika* and *Édouard* have had. He had tried the theatre and written a comedy for the Français; it had collapsed amidst thunderous noise! I have given an account of his first and only performance. His name was Henri de Latouche. He was a compatriot of George Sand and a friend of the family. George Sand decided to look him up.

De Latouche, as I have already said, I knew but slightly, and, about 1832, I quarrelled with him because I was not Republican enough to suit him, or, rather, because I belonged to a different style of Republicanism than his. He was at this time a man of forty-five, with a face that scintillated with intellect, with a rather corpulent frame and very courteous manners, although they covered an infinite fund of irony. His language was choice and his speech pure and well-modulated; he spoke as he wrote, or, rather, as he dictated. Was he a suitable guide for a

beginner? I have my doubts. De Latouche was arbitrary in his opinions; he thought that all who were not devoted to him were hostile, all not for him against him. As timid as a chamois, he continually believed there was a hatched conspiracy on the way to calumniate and destroy him. He retired into his retreat at la Vallée-aux-Loups. His enemies accused him of cowardice and tried to pursue him there; but, if they ventured too far, they returned with their faces marked as with a tiger's claws. He began by teasing the poor novice cruelly, condemning, like Alcestis, all her literary attempts.

"Nevertheless," says George Sand, "beneath all the jeerings and criticism, the sportive, trenchant, amusing mockery he heaped upon me in our interviews, reason, taste, in a word, art, presented itself to me. No one excelled more than he in the destruction of the illusions of conceitedness; but no one had more kindly delicacy in preserving hope and courage. He had a sweet and touching voice, an aristocratic and clear pronunciation, and a manner that was both alluring and teasing. The eye that was put out when he was a child did not disfigure him in the least, the only trace of the accident left was a kind of red fire which shot from the pupil and gave him a strange look of brilliancy when he was excited."

No, the eye did not disfigure de Latouche's face, but it disfigured his character terribly! Perhaps, also, he owed some portion of his latent talent to this blind eye, as Byron did to his lame foot. We will go on quoting George Sand's own words, which complete the picture of de Latouche's character:—

"M. de Latouche loved to instruct, to reprove, to lay down the law; but he quickly lost patience with vain people, and turned his wit against them in derisive compliments, which were inexpressibly malicious. When he met a mind disposed to profit by his lessons, his satire was more kindly; his clutch became paternal and his fiery eye softened; and, after he had emptied the overflowings of his wit upon you, he let you see a tender,

sensitive heart beneath, full of devoted and generous feeling."

Six months went by in this kind of work between pupil and master, the master pointing out what the scholar ought to read, himself reading them to her in his own fashion—namely, relating the book to her instead of reading it, adding to the author's narrative the brilliant embroideries of his imagination, letting fall from his lips at every word he uttered a pearl or diamond, as did the fairy in the *Thousand and One Nights*, of whom we all read in our childhood.

De Latouche was editor of *Le Figaro* at this period; a species of hussar of opposition, an officer of light cavalry which daily tilted against the Government. The ordinary editors of the paper were Félix Pyat and Jules Sandeau. George Sand was added to them. This addition was a sort of diploma of bachelor of letters. De Latouche's three pupils (I hope, since George Sand accepted the title, that the others will not disown it) had one common editorial office where they met daily at a given hour. It was in this office, seated at the little tables covered with green cloths, that they each wrote *copy*. Copy, be it understood, is in this case very improperly the synonym for manuscript. De Latouche gave out a subject; they enlarged upon it, and the paper appeared to be written by one single mind, since it had but a single spirit, and that spirit descended, like the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, in tongues of fire upon his disciples. But all these attentions did not serve to make the poor pupil able to dispense with her master. The future author of *Indiana* and of *Valentine*, and of so many other wonderful books, did not know how to write a newspaper article, nor how to be brief. De Latouche reserved for her all the sentimental anecdotes which admitted of some enlargement of treatment; but George Sand found she always had to confine herself to the narrow limits of half a column,

a column, or a column and a half at most, and, when the article had *begun* to *begin*, it had to be ended off; there was no room left for more.

Out of the ten articles George Sand gave to her editor-in-chief, often not a single one was of any use, and often he lit his fire with the copy which, she declares, was no good for anything else. Yet every day he said to her—

"Do not be discouraged, my child. You cannot write an article in ten lines; but, some day, you will write novels in ten volumes. Try, first of all, to rid your mind of imitations; all beginners start by copying others. Don't be anxious, you will gradually find your own feet, and be the first to forget how it all came to you."

And, as a matter of fact, during six weeks of the spring of 1832, which she spent in the country, George Sand wrote a novel in two volumes. That novel was *Indiana*. She returned from the country, went to see Latouche and confessed, trembling, the fresh crime she had just committed.

"What good luck!" exclaimed de Latouche; "it will be said that I foresaw this; I have looked for and found you a publisher; give him your novel."

"Will you not have a look at it, then?" asked the author.

"No, you are hard to read, and I do not like reading manuscript. Take the two volumes to the publisher, claim your 1200 francs, and I will criticise the work in its printed form."

As George Sand knew of nothing better to do than to follow this advice, she did as she was told. Sometimes we say *he* and sometimes *she*; I hope George Sand will excuse us! Have we not said that her wonderful genius was as hermaphrodite as *la Fragoletta* of her master!

A month later, George Sand received from her publisher the twelve copies reserved for the author. *Indiana* had been published that very day. De Latouche entered.

"Oh! oh!" he said, scenting out the volumes fresh

from the press, as the ogre in Tom Thumb smelt the fresh flesh; "what is this?"

"Alas!" replied the trembling pupil, "it is my book."

"Ah! yes, *Indiana*, I remember."

But we will let George Sand herself tell about this momentous occasion in her life.

"He seized a volume with avidity, cut the first pages with his fingers, and began to make fun as usual, exclaiming, 'Ah! imitation, imitation, the usual style! Here is Balzac, *were that possible*!' Coming out with me on the balcony which runs round the roof of my house, he said over again to me all the clever, excellent things he had already told me, upon the necessity of being oneself, and not imitating others. At first, I thought he was unjust, but, as he went on speaking, I agreed with him. He said I must return to my water-colours upon screens and snuff-boxes, which amused me, certainly, more than other pursuits, but for which, unfortunately, I found no sale. My position had become desperate; and yet, whether because I had not entertained any hope of success, or was provided with the light-heartedness of youth, I was not upset by my judge's sentence, and passed a very tranquil night. Upon awaking, I received this letter from him which I have always kept:—

"'Forget all my severe remarks of yesterday, forget all the hard things I have said to you the last six months; I have spent the night reading your-book, etc. . . .'

"There follow two lines of praise, which only friendship could have prompted, but which he had the bad taste to put down, and the note ends with the paternal words: 'Oh, my child, I am proud of you!'"

With *Indiana*, George Sand put one foot inside the literary world; with *Valentine* she put both. You know now how the masculine and virile genius who calls herself George Sand began her career.

CHAPTER V

Eugène Sue—His family, birth, godfather and godmother—His education—Dr. Sue's wine-cellar—Choir of botanists—Committee of chemistry—Dinner on the grass—Eugène Sue sets out for Spain—His return—Ferdinand Langlé's room—Captain Gauthier

TWENTY kilometres from Grasse there lies a small seaport called La Calle; it is the cradle of the Sue family, celebrated both in science and letters.

La Calle is still peopled by members of this family, which, probably, composes half the population. It was from here that, towards the close of the reign of Louis XIV., a young, adventurous student set up as a doctor in Paris. Becoming successful, he sent for his nephew to come to the capital. Both became very distinguished: Pierre Sue, as Professor of Forensic and Librarian of the Medical School—he left behind him works of great scientific value—Jean Sue, as Head, surgeon to the Hospital de la Charité, Professor of the School of Medicine, Professor of Anatomy at the École des Beaux-Arts, and surgeon to King Louis XVI. This latter was succeeded by Jean-Joseph Sue, who, besides the post of Professor to the Beaux-Arts, which he inherited from his father, became principal doctor to the king's military household. It was Eugène Sue's father who had the famous discussion with Cabanis about the guillotine, the inventor making out that a person guillotined only felt a slight chill on the neck, while Jean-Joseph Sue, on the contrary, maintained that it was dreadfully painful, and defended

his opinion by arguments which proved his profound knowledge of anatomy; and by experiments made by some German doctors and others. We read all the discussion in connection with our *Mille et un Fantômes*; and we admit to having taken a lively interest in it.

Eugène Sue was born on 1 January 1803. He was, consequently, five months younger than I, and a few days older than Victor Hugo. His godfather was Prince Eugène and his godmother the Empress Josephine; hence, his Christian name Eugène. He was suckled by a goat, and, for a long while, preserved the queer, hopping gait of his foster-mother. He studied, or, rather, did not study, at the Collége Bourbon:—like all men who are destined to make for themselves an original and eminent position in literature, he was an execrable scholar. His father, a ladies' doctor, who gave a course of natural history lectures for the benefit of society people, was married three times. He was wealthy, possessing nearly two million francs, and he lived in the rue du Chemin-du-Rempart, a street which has disappeared, but which was then situated behind the Madeleine. The whole of this quarter was at that time occupied by timber-yards: the ground then not being worth half what it now is. M. Sue had a fine house there and a magnificent garden. In the same house as M. Sue, lived his sister, the mother of Ferdinand Langlé, who wrote upwards of fifty comic operas with Villeneuve between 1822 and 1830.

At the period at which we have arrived, 1817 to 1818, the two cousins went together to the Collége Bourbon, that is to say, Ferdinand Langlé went to the college, and Eugène Sue was supposed to go there. He had a private tutor at his residence, Father Delteil, a plucky Auvergnat five feet in height, who, in fulfilment of his tutorial duties, did not hesitate to have hand-to-hand tussles with his pupil, when he fled into the garden only to be pursued after the fashion of Virgil's Galatea. When in the garden, the rebellious pupil gained an arsenal con-

taining arms defensive and offensive. The defensive arms were the borders of the botanical garden, amongst which he took refuge, where his tutor dared not follow him for fear of trampling under foot the rare plants which the fugitive scholar crushed pitilessly without remorse under foot; the offensive arms were the supporting stakes which bore labels with the scientific names of the plants thereon, stakes which Eugène Sue converted into javelins, and with which he overcame his master with a skill that would have done honour to a pupil of Castor and Pollux, the two cleverest javelin throwers of antiquity.

When it was demonstrated to Eugène's father that his son's vocation was to throw javelins and not to expound Horace and Vergil, he took him away from college, and made him enter as an assistant-surgeon at the hospital attached to the king's household, of which he himself was head-surgeon. It was situated in the rue Blanche. Eugène Sue there found his cousin, Ferdinand Langlé, and the future doctor, Louis Véron.

We have said that Eugène Sue had many of his foster-mother's characteristics: the scamp of the household, ever ready to play wicked tricks, especially on his father, who had just remarried, and who treated him very harshly. But he avenged himself well in respect of this harsh treatment! Dr. Sue employed his pupils in preparing his course of natural history lectures; the preparations were conducted in a splendid anatomical room that had been bequeathed to the Beaux-Arts. It contained, among other things, the brain of Mirabeau, preserved in a glass jar. The legitimate organisers were Eugène Sue and Ferdinand Langlé, and a friend of theirs called Delâtre, who afterwards became, and probably still is, a doctor of medicine; the amateur assistants were Achille Petit, and that old and clever friend James Rousseau, whom I have often mentioned. The preparations were quite dreary enough, but were rendered more so because close at hand were two cupboards full of wine, to which

the nectar of the gods was but as the white wine of Limoux : these wines were presents which the Allied Sovereigns had given to Dr. Sue after 1814. There was Tokay, given by the Emperor of Austria ; Rhenish wines, given by the King of Prussia ; Johannisberg wines, given by M. de Metternich ; and, finally, a hundred bottles of Alicante, given by Madame de Morville, which bore the most respectable and venerable date 1750. They had tried every possible means of opening the cupboards, which had virtuously resisted persuasion as well as force ; they despaired of ever making the acquaintance of Madame de Morville's Alicante, M. de Metternich's Johannisberg, the King of Prussia's "Liebfraumilch," and the Emperor of Austria's Tokay, otherwise than by the samples which, at Dr. Sue's grand dinners, he poured out for his guests into glasses the size of a thimble, when, one day, while fumbling about in a skeleton, Eugène Sue found, by chance, a bunch of keys. They were the keys of the cupboards ! First, they laid hands on a bottle of Tokay, sealed with the Imperial seal, and emptied every drop in it ; then they hid the bottle. The next day it was the turn for the Johannisberg, and, the day after, for the "Liebfraumilch" ; next followed the Alicante. They disposed of these three bottles in the same way as the first. But James Rousseau, who was the oldest and, consequently, possessed superior knowledge of the world to that of his young friends, who had only just ventured their first steps upon the slippery ground of society, judiciously pointed out that, at the rate they were going, they would quickly make a hole which Dr. Sue's eyes would perceive, and so find out the truth. He therefore made the astute suggestion of drinking but a third of the contents of each bottle, filling them up with some composition which should look as much like wine as possible, recorking them scientifically and putting them back in their places again. Ferdinand Langlé approved the suggestion, and added an amendment : namely, to proceed to the

great and solemn occasion of opening the cupboard in old-fashioned style, to the accompaniment of the singing of choruses. Both propositions were carried unanimously. That same day they opened a cupboard to a chorus copied from *La Leçon de botanique*, by Dupaty. The Corypheus sang—

" Que l'amour et la botanique
N'occupent pas tous les instants ;
Il faut aussi que l'on s'applique
A boire le vin des parents !

CHŒUR.
Buvons le vin des grands parents ! "

Then precept was followed by example. When started, they composed a second chorus for the work. Their work consisted especially in stuffing the magnificent birds which they received from all four quarters of the globe.

This is the chorus of the workers—

" Goûtons le sort que le ciel nous destine ;
Reposons-nous sur le sein des oiseaux ;
Mêlons le camphre à la térébenthine,
Et par le vin égayons nos travaux."

Whereupon, they took a second pull at the bottle, which was soon half-emptied. They next had to follow James Rousseau's counsel and fill it up. For this purpose they appointed a chemical committee, comprised of Ferdinand Langlé, Eugène Sue and Delâtre ; later, Romieu was added to it. This chemical committee concocted a horrible mixture of treacle, liquorice and burnt sugar, replaced the wine with the improvised mixture, recorked the bottle as carefully as possible and put it back in its place. When it was a white wine, they clarified the preparation with beaten-up white of egg. But punishment occasionally falls upon the guilty.

M. Sue gave large and splendid dinner-parties : at dessert, they sometimes drank Madame de Morville's Alicante, sometimes His Majesty the Emperor of Austria's Tokay, at others, M. de Metternich's Johannisberg, or the

King of Prussia's "Liebfraumilch." All went swimmingly if they happened to fall upon an unopened bottle; but, if they lit upon one examined and corrected by the committee of chemistry. . . . Well, they had to swallow the drink! Dr. Sue tasted his wine, made a slight grimace, and said, "It is good, but wants to be drunk!" This was so great a truth, and the wine did indeed cry out to be drunk, that next day they began drinking it again. Such a performance was bound to end in a catastrophe, and this one proved no exception. One day, when they believed Dr. Sue to be at his country place of Bouqueval, from whence they reckoned he could not well return in the day, they managed, by dint of various seductive overtures to the cook and the servants, to have an excellent dinner served them on the lawn in the garden. All the bird-stuffers, the chemical committee included, were present, lying about on the grass, crowned by roses like Sybarites, drinking Tokay and Johannisberg, or, rather, having drunk it, when, suddenly, the door of the house leading out into the garden opened, and the commander appeared—the commander being Dr. Sue. Every one of them fled and hid; Rousseau alone took up his empty glass, refilled a second glass, and, stumbling forward straight towards the doctor, he said—

"Ah! dear Doctor Sue, this is the famous Tokay! Let us drink the health of the Emperor of Austria!"

One can imagine the doctor's wrath when he found the empty Tokay bottle on the grass, together with two bottles of Johannisberg and three of Alicante. They had drunk the Alicante like common wine. Talk of thievery, of procureur du roi, of police correctionnelle, rolled in the air like thunder rolling in the clouds during a storm. Profound was the terror of the guilty parties. Delâtre knew of a dried-up well near Clermont and proposed to take refuge in it!

A week later, Eugène Sue set out as assistant to explore the country of Spain (in 1823). He did this and stayed a

year at Cadiz, only returning to Paris at the beginning of 1825. The heat of the Trocadero had made his hair and moustache grow; he was as beardless as an apple when he left, and he returned as hairy as a king of the primitive races and as bearded as a moujik. This capillary growth doubtless flattered the doctor's vanity, but it did not serve to unloosen his purse-strings, which he kept tightly shut.

Desforges who had a small private fortune, and Ferdinand Langlé whose mother worshipped him, were the two Crœsuses of society; several times, as did Crœsus with Cæsar, they presented not 30,000,000 sesterces, but 20, 30, 40, 50 and even 100 francs to the most necessitous of the joyous band. Besides his purse, Ferdinand Langlé put at the disposition of the members of the society, who were never sure of a bed or supper, his own room in M. Sue's house, and the meal his mother always put ready for him every night.

Ferdinand Langlé, then a tall fellow of twenty-three, author of a dozen vaudevilles, lover of the charming girl called Fleurriet, who died before her time, an actress at the Gymnase,[1] rarely slept at home, but, as the servant told his mother that Ferdinand lived with the frugality of a monk, the good mother ordered a meal to be put upon his bedroom table every night. The servant put the supper on the table, and the key of the little street door in an agreed spot. When a belated one was homeless he turned his steps to the rue du Chemin-du-Rempart, put his hand into a hole in the wall, found the key there, opened the door, religiously put the key back in its place, drew the door to behind him, lit the candle and, if he

[1] I have already spoken of her in connection with my literary beginnings with de Leuven. Castaing was accused of having poisoned her, but she really died from the effects of a fit of anger against Poirson, manager of the Gymnase, concerning the engagement by that theatre of Madame Théodore. The fit of anger brought on brain fever, which carried her off in forty-eight hours.

were the first to come, ate, drank and slept in the bed. If a second followed the first, he found the key in the same place, entered in the same way, ate the remains of the fowl, drank the rest of the wine, lifted the bedclothes in his turn and dived underneath them. If a third followed, the same game was played with the key and door, only the visitor found no more fowl or wine and no room in the bed, but ate the rest of the bread and drank a glass of water and stretched himself upon the couch. And so *ad infinitum*. If the number increased immoderately, the last-comers drew a mattress from the bed and slept on the floor. One night, Rousseau arrived last and counted fourteen legs. It was in this room that Henry Monnier and Romieu met for the first time and made each other's acquaintance. Next day they thee'd and thou'd each other, and continued to do so until Romieu was appointed prefect and *tutoya*-ed people no more. Next morning, they were pretty often awakened by a visitor, a brigadier of the *Gardes*, who, in passing by, came to look at the state of Ferdinand Langlé's wine cellar. This brigadier, whom I knew well, deserves particular mention. His name was Gauthier de Villiers. He was not only one of the bravest soldiers in the army, but one of the most active boxers in France. The word boxer applies here to his whole body. What became of Captain Gauthier, I have no idea. I would gladly see him once more, even at the risk of his breaking my wrist in shaking hands. He had the courage and the good-heartedness of Porthos. Not for the whole world would he have given a fillip to a child; but he had more wit than M. de Pierrefonds. He had served in the Horse Grenadiers of the Empire; he had made a special name for himself as a sabreman; when he charged and stabbed an enemy on horseback, he would lift him from his horse by the strength of his wrist and throw him behind him, as though he were a truss of hay. Gauthier stopped with one hand a tilbury that was going at full trot. He would get off his horse, put it on his

shoulders and carry it for ten, fifteen or twenty yards with almost as much ease as his horse carried him. He would pick up a china plate and put his finger through it with the same ease as a bullet passes through a cardboard target. One day at the barracks, they did him an injustice for which he wanted to have satisfaction. He waited on the bridge of the Tuileries for King Louis XVIII., who was to come out. Just as His Majesty's carriage passed out at a fast trot, as usual, Gauthier leaped to the horses' heads and stopped the coach dead. Louis XVIII. put his head out of the window and recognised his brigadier *aux gardes*.

"Ah! it is you," he said, in his little piping voice, "it is you, Gauthier. Well, what do you want, my friend?"

Gauthier then came up and laid bare his request.

"I will examine into it, I will examine into it," replied Louis XVIII.

A week later justice was done Gauthier.

He had a special gift for saving life. If a man fell into the water and was drowning, Gauthier jumped in and saved him; if any house caught fire and some tardy inmate was in risk of being burned, Gauthier would save the laggard. He saved old Vatteville from the Odéon conflagration, and thirty-seven or eight others besides. Gauthier went out in the African campaign as interpreter, and lived at Algiers. In the expeditions made round the town, he took a little cannon of four, instead of a rifle. When he came up to the enemy he put it in position for firing, and discharged it. At other times, he was contented with a rampart gun. While in the guards he had a magnificent horse which had the following history. It had the twofold fault of throwing its rider to the ground, and, when he was there, of bending to bite him: they decided to kill it. But, when proceeding to the execution, Gauthier came into the Hôtel du quai d'Orsay, and saw the whole company assembled together, deploring the

loss of such a splendid horse. He inquired into the matter.

"Good!" he said, "I will tackle it; but on condition that, if I conquer it, it shall be mine."

The bargain was agreed to, and they handed him a bridle. The horse quietly allowed itself to be mounted; so Gauthier had not much trouble in leaping on its back. When he was there, the horse began its tricks and games, shying to right and to left, etc., but the rebellious animal did not know with whom it had to deal. Gauthier began to press his knees in; the horse, which was breathing hard, redoubled its leapings: Gauthier pressed more strongly. It was a splendid struggle to watch; the horse was vanquished, and ended by falling on its knees and lying down. Gauthier leapt off to free himself from the animal, then he waited. The horse was cured of his first fault, which consisted in throwing its rider; it must also be cured of its second habit of biting. As we have said, Gauthier remained standing ten yards from the horse. He had subjugated it like another Alexander; it remained to find out if he was to be devoured by it like another Diomede. In fact, as the horse regained its breath its eye went red, its nostrils smoked with anger; it raised itself on its fore legs, then on its hind, looked at its enemy, neighed and rushed upon him. Gauthier waited for it in the position of a boxer; he gave it a blow on the nose and broke two teeth, the horse reared with pain, turned round on its hind legs, and went into its stable. It was conquered. You, d'Arpentigny, will remember that, you too, Leroi and Ferdinand Langlé, my old friends in the Guards?

Well, Gauthier was one of the morning callers. He went straight to the cellar, applied his lips to the flask of rum or brandy, and swallowed as much as was in it. He began by feeling in his pockets; we must do him that justice, but they were as empty as the cellar. Then, seeing three or four waistcoats and as

many trousers lying about haphazard, he began to pass them in review. The sleepers watched him do it, one eye half open and the other completely shut; they were quite easy, for it was neither their waistcoats nor their trousers that Gauthier wanted: he could hardly get into the largest—he wanted their contents, and they contained nothing. Romieu alone manifested some disquietude; he had 19 sous in his waistcoat pocket. Gauthier fell upon the treasure. Romieu wanted to get up and dispute possession of his 19 sous with Gauthier. Gauthier pinned him down on his sofa with one hand, and, with the other, rang for the servant. When he appeared, Gauthier said to him—

"Go and fetch 19 sous' worth of brandy."

The servant prepared to obey.

"But, *sacre bleu!*" said Romieu, "I live in the faubourg Saint-Germain: as least leave me a sou to cross the pont des Arts."

"That is quite reasonable," said Gauthier, putting back one sou into Romieu's waistcoat. "Go and fetch me 18 sous' worth of brandy," he said to the servant.

It was upon that day and occasion that the robbed one, whom Gauthier had deprived of his 18 sous, but not of his spirits and quick-wittedness, made the famous chanson—

"J'nai qu'un sou,
J'nai qu'un sou,
La richess' n'est pas l'Pérou!
Je dîn'rai je ne sais pas où;
Mais, pour sûr, je n'ai qu'un sou!"

I forget the rest of it, so ask Henri Monnier to sing it you and he will recollect as vividly as I do the occasion upon which it was made.

CHAPTER VI

Eugène Sue is ambitious enough to have a groom, horse and trap—He does business with the maison Ermingot, Godefroi et Cie which permits him to gratify that fancy—Triumph at the Champs-Élysées—A vexing encounter—Desforges and Eugène Sue separate—Desforges starts *Le Kaléidoscope* at Bordeaux—Ferdinand Langlé starts *La Nouveauté* at Paris—César and the negro Zoyo—Dossion and his dog

TIME rolled on and Eugène Sue grew up, and Dr. Sue kept his purse-strings drawn tighter and tighter. Eugène wanted to have a groom, horse and trap; it was necessary to have recourse to expediency. He was put into communication with two worthy capitalists who sold wine to young persons of good family who felt a vocation for trading; their names were MM. Ermingot and Godefroi. We do not know whether these gentlemen still pursue the trade; but we will risk quoting their names, hoping they will not take the following words for an advertisement.

MM. Ermingot and Godefroi made inquiries, and they found that Eugène Sue was to inherit 100,000 francs from his maternal grandfather, and about 300,000 or 400,000 from his father. They concluded that they might risk somewhat. Eugène Sue received an invitation to lunch at Bercy with one or two of his friends. He decided to take Desforges, who was regarded as a society man in whom Dr. Sue had the greatest confidence. They were expected at the *Grands* or *Gros Marroniers*, I forget which. It was a splendid lunch; they made the two young men taste the wines they had on hand, and Eugène Sue, to whom wine was particularly seductive,

was so pleased with them, that he bought some there and then for a sum of 15,000 francs, which he settled for at once by bills of exchange. The wine was deposited at the house of a third party, with power to Eugène Sue to let them be tasted and to sell them, and so make what profit he could out of them. That profit, at the lowest estimate, must have been at least from 5000 to 6000 francs. A week later, Eugène Sue sold back to a confederate of Ermingot & Godefroi Company his lot of wine for the sum of 1500 francs ready money. He lost 13,500 francs upon the speculation; but, nevertheless, he had 1500 francs of money in hand at once with which to realise his wish to possess a groom, horse and trap, an ambition which, for over a year, had disturbed the sleep of the two friends.

"How could he get a groom and horse and trap," the reader asks, "for 1500 francs?"

It is incredible what credit 1500 francs ready money will give, especially when one is a son of good family, and when one can apply to one's father's trades-people. They bought the trap from Sailer, the doctor's carriage-dealer, and gave him 500 francs on account; they bought the horse from Kunsmann, where they took riding lessons, and gave him about 500 francs. They remained in possession of 500 francs: they engaged a groom, whom they clothed completely from head to foot. That was not ruinous, for they had credit at the tailor's, the bootmaker's and the hatter's. They had attained this magnificent result at the beginning of the winter of 1824–25. The trap was kept through the winter. In the spring, they decided to ride on horseback, to greet the appearance of the first leaves. One morning they set out; Desforges and Eugène Sue were on horseback, followed by their groom, also on horseback. The groom made awful grimaces, which the passers-by were at a loss to account for. Desforges and Eugène Sue alone knew the cause of the working of poor John's facial muscles: they had bought him which morning boots which were too

tight, and it had taken the combined efforts of both masters to get their servant into them. Half-way to the Champs-Élysées, as they were scattering greetings to men and smiles to ladies, a green conveyance drew up and a head appeared and examined the two elegants with stupefaction. The head belonged to Dr. Sue; the green vehicle was what the family called the three-lamped carriage: it was a low conveyance, invented by the doctor, from which one could descend without a step—the ancestor of all the small coupés in vogue nowadays. The head struck the two young people as did the head of Medusa; only, instead of turning them to stone, it gave them wings. They flew at a gallop, but, unluckily, they had to return. They did not do so until the day but one after, but they did return. Justice lay in wait at the gate in the person of Dr. Sue. They saw they must confess everything, and it was even a great relief to them; for the house of Ermingot & Godefroi was beginning to show its teeth and to send stamped papers, as the six months' bills drew near their end.

Dr. Sue's business agent was charged to settle matters with Ermingot & Godefroi; the firm had just had a little dispute at the police correctionnelle, which made them entirely accommodating: they returned the bills of exchange, less 2000 francs, and gave a receipt in full settlement. Whereupon Eugène Sue engaged to go back to his post at the military hospital at Toulon. Desforges completely lost the doctor's confidence; it was found out that he had been involved up to the hilt in the Ermingot & Godefroi affair, and he was placed on the index; and this, as he had independent means of his own, decided him to follow Eugène Sue to Toulon. Damon never gave greater proof of his devotion to Pythias. They left after spending the night together; but, at the moment of departure, enthusiasm ran so high that Romieu and Mira (son of the celebrated Brunel), decided to escort them to the diligence. Eugène Sue and Desforges were

in the coupé ; Romieu and Mira galloped by the side of each door. Romieu galloped as far as Fontainebleau ; there he was obliged to dismount. Mira was carried away three leagues farther, then he too was obliged to stop. The diligence continued imperially on its way, leaving the wounded on the road. They reached Toulon on the third day—now, one can go in twenty-four hours. The first care of the exiles was to write for news of their friends ; Romieu had been taken back to the capital on a stretcher. Mira had preferred to await his convalescence where he was, and, a fortnight later, returned in a carriage to Paris. The exiles settled themselves at Toulon, and began to play ducks and drakes with the remains of their Parisian grandeur, which, somewhat faded in Paris, was looked upon as luxury in Toulon. The Toulonnais began to to look upon the newcomers with an evil eye. They called Eugène Sue *le beau Sue*. It was much worse when they saw the dandies come nightly to the theatre, and when they perceived that they came especially to ogle Mademoiselle Florival, *la première amoureuse* ! It was almost like attacking the authorities ; the Sous-préfet had her specially under his care. Tho two Parisians were subscribers, and demanded entrance into the wings. Desforges made capital of his quality as author ; he had already had two or three pieces played. Eugène Sue was innocent of all literature, and gave no signs of a vocation for the career of a man of letters—he was more of an artist ; as a youngster he had gone through the studios, drawing, sketching, painting. Scarcely three or four years ago, I saw in an old street near the Madeleine, now vanished, a horse which he had drawn on the wall with black varnish and a shoe brush. The horse crumbled away with the street ! The door of the wings remained pitilessly closed, which gave the Toulonnais the incontestable right of jeering at the Parisians. Luckily Louis XVIII. died on 16 September 1824, and Charles X. conceived the idea of getting himself crowned. The ceremony was to have

taken place in the Cathedral of Rheims on 26 May 1825. Now, how could the death of Louis XVIII. in Paris and the coronation of King Charles X. at Rheims open the doors of the Toulon theatre to Desforges and Eugène Sue? In this way.

Desforges suggested to Eugène Sue to write what was called at that period an *à-propos* upon the coronation. Eugène Sue agreed. The *à-propos* was written and played in the midst of universal enthusiasm. I still have the trifle, written entirely by the hand of Eugène Sue. The same evening the two authors gained entrance behind the wings in unassailable fashion. Mademoiselle Florival did not prove more strict than the administration, and gave the two authors the run of her house. They both took advantage of it without any jealous feeling. The friendship of Desforges and Eugène Sue was akin to that of Damon and Pythias. About June 1825 Pythias and Damon parted; Eugène Sue remained alone in possession of the entry to the theatre and to Mademoiselle Florival's. Desforges departed to Bordeaux. Why did he go to Bordeaux? He thought he was simply going to see a friend: he went to start a newspaper. Mysterious and deep are the ways of Providence! Desforges thought of spending one or two days with his friend. Tessier took him to a bookseller, where they not merely sold books but also produced literature. It was in his shop, situated, I believe, in the rue Esprit-des-Lois, that the Hôtel Rambouillet of Bordeaux was held. The traveller there found eight or ten young people eager to catch a whiff of the Parisian breezes which carry literary pollen all over the world.

"Ah! if we only had a newspaper," they said; "if only we had some one to start one!"

"Very well, here am I!" replied Desforges, and as the upshot of this meeting, thanks to Desforges, *Le Kaléidoscope* was founded. Thus were scattered abroad the missionaries of the new faith, who prepared the great literary movement of 1827, 1828 and 1829.

Desforges, who only knew me by name at this period, not by my literary works—which were non-existent at that time—and by my childish name, which he had heard at M. Collard's, the good worthy tutor of whom I have had occasion to speak in these Memoirs, put some verses of mine in *Le Kaléidoscope*, a portion of my elegy on the death of General Foy, so far as I can recollect. Later, this formed the touchstone for our acquaintance in Paris.

One day, I went into the Café des Variétés, and Desforges was chatting with Théaulon, who nodded good-day to me. A minute later, Desforges came to me.

"Do you know," he said, "what Théaulon has just been saying about you?"

"Théaulon is very fond of me: you must not believe blindly all he says or even what he thinks of me."

"'Well,' he said, 'do you see that tall thin fellow, he will out-distance us all in literature.'"

I sent a dubious smile across to Théaulon and a sign of gratitude. From that day dated our acquaintance, or rather, let us say, our friendship with Desforges. Whilst Desforges was at Bordeaux starting *Le Kaléidoscope*, Ferdinand Langlé was starting *La Nouveauté* newspaper in Paris; yet another open tribute to the new school, another finger-post marking a step forward.

Langlé had conceived a financial idea which was not so bad for an assistant-surgeon in the Guards, especially when one considers that the idea preceded by seven years the appearance of Émile de Girardin, the man who had the most ideas about printing concerns: the first thousand subscribers to *La Nouveauté* at an outlay of 60 francs were to become proprietors of half the shares of the paper; the other half naturally belonged to the founder, Ferdinand Langlé. A fortnight after the prospectus had been sent out, they had 60,000 francs in the bank. I say in the bank, but, unluckily, there wasn't a bank: it was the want of a fixed place for depositing the money which led to there being only one cashier in a short time.

Heaven knows that it was not the cashier who had eaten up the money, we can give unexceptionable proof of this. The banker of *La Nouveauté* had a horse and carriage and a negro servant; he gave *Zoyo* (that was the servant's name) 7 francs per week for his board, and for that of his horse 28 francs per month! It was for him to make what profit he could out of it. He managed to feed himself out of the 7 francs, and to feed his horse with the outside rinds of melons, the leaves of salad and cabbage stalks which he found on rubbish heaps—he called it putting César out to grass. When that was insufficient, Zoyo begged from the passers-by.

"Why are you begging, you odd fish?" one of them asked him.

"Monsieur," replied Zoyo, "it is not for myself but for my poor César, who is dying of hunger."

Then he would point to the horse, whose noble and dignified bearing inspired sympathy. When the melon rinds, salad leaves and cabbage stalks were insufficient, and the appeals to public charity had yielded badly, Zoyo arrived at a great decision. He went to the boot-blacks who had an establishment at the entrance of the passage Feydeau, and blacked boots at half-price for the manager of the business. When he had earned 10 sous by cleaning ten pairs of boots, he converted his gain into a small quantity of oats or half a truss of hay, and César dined as well as possible. *When the bank closed* at five o'clock, César was harnessed and put into the trap; Zoyo clad himself in white breeches with top-boots, a yellow waistcoat, green coat and a broad-laced hat, decorated with a black cockade, and brought the trap round to the office door, No. 67 rue de Richelieu, opposite the bibliothèque Nationale. The banker jumped up into his trap, Zoyo flung back the hood and mounted up behind; they went to the boulevard, and drove as far as the place Louis XV., then along the Champs-Élysées and took a turn or two under the trees.

If people asked—

" Who is the gentleman with the chestnut horse, green trap and negro groom ? "

The reply was—

" He is the banker of *la Nouveauté* newspaper."

This did the newspaper good. But it was not enough to have a carriage only, it wanted a responsible editor, too. It was much more difficult at that period to find a responsible editor, and yet they were compelled to have one : many lawsuits were brought against newspapers, many responsible editors were thrown into prison ; responsible editors, therefore, were an absolute necessity.

Ferdinand Langlé cast his eye upon a kind of dwarf named Dossion. The police of the time did not demand that a responsible editor should have a special style of figure. This Dossion was a singular person, with a red nose and a curved back and he was always mounted on his high horse. I remember we called him the drum-major of the rats of the sewers of Montmartre. You may hunt up the origin of the name if you like! I have quite forgotten what it was ; but, of course, it was connected with some legend of the time, now forgotten. He had been prompter at the Vaudeville, and had done so much for good Désaugiers that he had obtained a part for him in the *Arlequins*, where he was Laporte's understudy ; but as he was short-sighted, on the day of his first appearance he conceived the ingenious notion of putting short-sighted spectacles to his mask : only he had not thought of one thing—the heat of the theatre dimmed the glasses, with the result that, as Dossion was running after Colombine, he did not see where he was putting his foot and disappeared down the prompter's trapdoor. Unlike roses, which only live a morning, Dossion had but lived one night. We invented a practical joke by means of which we made Dossion come on livid with anger. He had a dog of the same colour as d'Artagnan's horse, fluctuating between the shade of a jonquil and that of a buttercup.

As Dossion was mortally offended, we pretended that his dog had presented a petition to the Chamber to be authorised to leave his master ; but M. de Villèle's three hundred looked upon the matter as a political affair, and one of them even uttered the famous sentence—

" Anarchy is beginning to raise its head ! "

Castor's petition had passed into the order of the day. The unlucky animal, compelled to remain attached to Dossion, died of ennui. I do not know whether Dossion is dead or alive : if alive, the lines I have just written are a homage rendered him ; if dead, a flower which I throw on his grave.[1]

[1] See Appendix.

CHAPTER VII

Eugène Sue's début in journalism — *L'Homme-Mouche* — The merino sheep—Eugène Sue in the Navy—He takes part in the battle of Navarino—He furnishes a house—The last folly of youth—Another *Fils de l'Homme*—Bossange and Desforges

TOWARDS the end of 1825, Eugène Sue returned from Toulon. He found *La Nouveauté* in a most prosperous state. As his friend Ferdinand Langlé was the manager; as Sue had just had an *à-propos* played at Toulon of which he was the author, he naturally became editor of the paper. They asked him for articles, and he did four, a series entitled *L'Homme-Mouche*.

These were the first items by the author of *Mathilde* and of the *Mystères de Paris*, which had been printed; it seems strange we should give them here. Our Memoirs, as we have said, are the literary archives of the first half of the nineteenth century; besides, it is always interesting to artists to study the early start of men who have attained to the height of our illustrious confrère.

The four articles which he wrote appeared on Monday, 23 January 1826, Wednesday 25, Sunday 29, Tuesday 31.[1] We can see that the opposition of our friend Eugène Sue does not date from yesterday.

Meantime, *La Nouveauté* did not pay its contributors very well. On the other hand, Dr. Sue remained inflexible: he had taken to heart not only the wine drunk, but, still more, the wine they had spoiled! There remained one source, of which they only availed themselves on great occasions; this was a Louis XVI. enamel-

[1] See Appendix.

backed watch, given by his good godmother, the Empress Joséphine. In extreme cases, they took it to the pawnshop and got 150 francs on it. This defrayed the expenses of the Shrove Tuesday of 1826; but then, after holding out as long as possible, he had to take the step of going away into the country. Bouqueval offered the young men rural and frugal hospitality, so they went there.

Easter arrived, and with it some guests; each had promised to bring his share of food: one a lobster, another a meat pie, etc.; but, as ill luck would have it, each counted on his neighbour, and, all of them probably being short of money, none of them brought anything. They went straight to the stables and killed a sheep: it was a magnificent merino, which Dr. Sue was keeping for show purposes! It was skinned, roasted and eaten up to the very last cutlet. When the doctor learnt this fresh misdeed he got into an abominable temper! Happily, Eugène Sue confronted these paternal outbreaks with admirable serenity. The good lad had a charming nature, he was ever gay, joyous and laughing. Is he still the same, now that he is a man? Care has lined his face, and exile weighs heavily on his heart! Orders were given for Eugène Sue to leave Paris. He went into the navy, and made two voyages to the Antilles—hence, his novel *Atar Gull* and his magnificent landscape passages, which read like fairyland, seen through the fissures of a stage curtain. Then he returned to France. A decisive battle was to be fought against the Turks: Eugène Sue embarked in his official capacity as adjutant on board the *Breslau*, Captain la Bretonnière; he was present at the battle of Navarino, and brought back as *spolia opima* a magnificent Turkish costume—which, on his return, was eaten up to the last bit of lace—a sabre and a Koran. Whilst living on the Turkish costume, Eugène Sue, who by degrees was picking up the taste for literature, had acted, with Desforges, *Monsieur le Marquis*. Finally, about

the same time, *Plick et Plock*, his first departure in the way of a novel, appeared in *La Mode*.

Meanwhile, Eugène's maternal grandfather died, leaving him nearly 75,000 francs. Here was an inexhaustible fortune! So the young poet, who was then twenty-four, sent in his resignation to the ministre de la marine, and furnished his house. We say that he furnished his house, because Eugène Sue, artist by custom and instinct, was the first to furnish a suite of rooms in the modern fashion; he was the first to have all those charming knick-knacks which no one then wanted, but which everybody snatches at nowadays: coloured glasses, china plates, Saxe china, renaissance chests, Turkish sabres, Malayan daggers, etc. Then he went to Gudin's studio and began to paint. We have said that Eugène Sue drew, or rather sketched, quite cleverly. He had, I remember, brought an album from Navarino of twofold curiosity, both from the illustrations, and from the artistic point of view. It was while with the famous sea painter that the last of Eugène Sue's escapades happened, and this closed the list of those youthful follies which had made the society of Rousseau, Romieu and Eugène Sue notorious. We have related in connection with the parody of *Henry IV.*, the famous attack made on the porter in the rue du Mont-Blanc, known by the nickname of *Portier je veux de tes cheveux*, which found its way into *Les Mystères de Paris*.

Gudin, who was then thirty, was already in the full tide of his talent and the splendour of his renown; amateurs snatched at his works, women quarrelled over the man. Gudin, like all artists of a certain standing, received letters from unknown women from time to time, desiring to make his acquaintance, and making appointments with him for that purpose. One day, he received two such; both letters fixing the same hour. Gudin could not break himself in two, and he spoke of his difficulty to Eugène Sue. So Eugène Sue offered to take his place. It is but a step from pupil to master; besides, there was a great physical

resemblance between the two men: they were the same height, both wore beards, had dark hair, fine eyes, and splendid teeth; one was twenty-seven, and the other thirty; the worst treated of the two unknown women could not have cried out against the thief. Furthermore, they put the two letters in a hat, and each took his out. From that moment, and during the rest of the day, there were two Gudins and no Eugène Sue. Each went to his appointed place that night; next day, both returned enchanted. The thing might have lasted for ever, but inquisitiveness always destroys women—witness Eve and Psyche. The lady who had obtained the false Gudin as her share had artistic tastes; when she had made the painter's acquaintance, she would insist upon visiting the studio to see Gudin work, palette and paint-brush in hand. Among the number of inquisitive women, we have forgotten Semele, who wanted to see her lover Jupiter in all his splendour, and who was burned alive by a flash of lightning. The false Gudin could not withstand the many pleadings, and consented to grant a rendezvous to the beauteous *curieuse* on the morrow. She was to come at two o'clock in the afternoon, the most favourable time of day for light on painting. At a quarter to two, Eugène Sue, clad in magnificent livery, waited in Gudin's antechamber; at a few minutes to two, the bell was tremulously rung by the happy visitor. Eugène Sue went to open the door. The lady, eager to see everything, began by casting her glances on the servant, who looked a smart, strapping youth, and who bowed humbly before her. Her examination was followed by a terrible cry. "Horrors! A lackey! . . ." The lady hid her face in her handkerchief and ran precipitately down the stairs. At a masked ball soon after, Eugène Sue met her again, and tried to renew acquaintance with her; but she persisted in believing that he was still disguised, and Eugène Sue could not get anything from her but the words he had heard before—"Horrors! a lackey! . . ."

The campaign of Algiers arrived, and Gudin went with the expedition; the two friends became separated. Eugène Sue took to literature. *Atar Gull* was begun at this period. Then came the July Revolution. Eugène Sue and Desforges together wrote a comedy entitled *Le Fils de l'Homme*. Barthélemy's poem will be recollected upon the same subject: the King of Rome, a poetic figure, lonely and imprisoned at Schönbrünn, as Napoleon had been at St. Helena. Youthful memories awoke in Eugène Sue; he remembered that Joséphine had been his godmother, and that he bore the name of Prince Eugène.

The comedy was written, but got no further. Not only had the Orleanist reaction been rapid, but Desforges, one of its authors, had become secretary to Maréchal Soult. But an author's conceit is a most venturesome passion, just as poor girls may be seen to betray their maternity through their maternal love. One day, when Desforges had been breakfasting with Volnys, he drew the incendiary play from his portfolio and read it to his host. Volnys is the son of a general of the Empire. Volny's heart was melted with the reading.

"Leave me the manuscript," he said; "I want to read it again."

So Desforges left it him. Six weeks went by. A rumour went abroad secretly in the literary world that a great excitement was being prepared at the *Nouveautés*. People questioned what that event could be.

Bossange was then the manager of the theatre; he collaborated with Frédéric Soulié in two or three dramas, and was one of the cleverest men in Paris. Bossange we say, was manager, and included our dear Déjazet among the number of his staff. The two of them together were known to be capable of doing anything. The rumour of this literary event, which was to turn Paris upside down, reached the ears of Desforges, buried away though he was in the recesses of his office. He trembled, and a revelation came to him. Suppose the dramatic sensation

was to be the first performance of the *Fils de l'Homme!* He decided to go that very night to the Nouveautés, and to find out about it from Bossange. Accordingly, by eight o'clock, Desforges was behind the wings.

"Oh! do not discuss your business with me to-night, my dear Desforges!" said the manager to him. "I am in a state of despair! Such and such a man (I forget who) has failed us with his play, and we are obliged at the very last moment to give a play that was under rehearsal and not properly learnt. Come, stage manager, is Déjazet ready?"

"Yes, Monsieur Bossange."

"Well, give the three raps and announce what we have arranged."

They did so; shouts went up of "Take your places on the stage!" and Desforges was obliged to sit down like the others behind a wing.

The stage manager in a white collar and black coat went on the stage, and after the usual three bows he said—

"Gentlemen, one of our actors having fallen ill at the last moment, we are obliged to give you, instead of the second piece, a new comedy which was to have been put on in three or four days' time. We beg you to accept the exchange."

The audience to whom a new play was being offered instead of an old drowned the manager's words with applause. The curtain fell, and rose almost immediately afterwards. At this moment, Déjazet came down out of his dressing-room in the uniform of an Austrian colonel.

"Ah! good heavens!" exclaimed Desforges, stopping him, "what are you going to play?"

"To play? Why *le Fils de l'Homme* . . . Come, let me pass, monsieur author!"

Desforges' arms fell and Déjazet passed on.

The great event of the Théâtre des Nouveautés was in fact the representation of *le Fils de l'Homme*; only,

Bossange, who feared some hindrance from the Government, had preserved the profoundest secrecy and, as we see, played the comedy suddenly.[1]

"But, you may say, was there a censorship in 1830?"

"D'Artagnan, my good friend, take your hat off to the person who has honoured us by putting that question to us, and salute profoundly, then reply:

"Ah! monsieur, worse luck, there is always a censorship."

[1] See the complete biography of Eugène Sue, in *Les Morts vont vite*, tome II. p. 1.

BOOK VIII

CHAPTER I

The political duels

AT the beginning of the year 1833 which now opens before us, the eyes of all France were turned towards the Château de Blaye, in which Madame la duchesse de Berry had been incarcerated.

On 28 January a question was put to the Government by M. de Dreux-Brézé in connection with a petition addressed to the Chambre des Pairs, by several pensioners of the old Civil List, relative to the detention of the princess. It should be said that, for the most part, with but few exceptions, the moral feeling of France rose up against that detention as it has since risen against that of Abd-el-Kader. M. de Dreux-Brézé had asked leave to speak, and it had been granted. He mounted the tribune.

"As the Chamber has allowed me to speak," he said, "I will permit myself to point out to it that the right of petition laid down by the charter has, for some time past, become an illusory right in the Assembly. A great number of petitions relative to the law about the state of siege have been addressed to the Chamber, but as yet no report has been brought in upon it. Now I ask you, why has no such report been drawn up? If it is not done when the Chamber has decreed a law upon the subject, what becomes of the right of petition? But there are

other petitions of a higher order which I am amazed not to see brought forward; I mean those relating to the captivity of an illustrious princess whose fate is attracting the notice of France and Europe. I cannot be ignorant of their existence, since they have nearly all been addressed to me to place before the Chamber; I will, therefore, seize the opportunity which is offered to me by the publicity of its debates to testify to the petitioners my deep gratitude for the confidence with which they have honoured me. I received a petition this morning relative to the same object, containing seventeen hundred signatures. How is it, gentlemen, that, in contempt of the right of petition, thousands of signatures are allowed to be buried in portfolios which demand the setting at liberty of Madame la duchesse de Berry? And under what circumstances? It is impossible not to feel the liveliest fear for her person and well-founded alarms in other directions; for, taking into account the unhealthiness of her place of detention, her captivity is not merely an arbitrary act, but becomes an attempt upon her life! I do not propose, gentlemen, to enter into a discussion here which, at this juncture, would be irrelevant; but I ask the Chamber to fix at once the day for a debate on the numerous petitions which plead for the liberty of Madame la duchesse de Berry."

The Keeper of the Seals next mounted the Tribune, and replied—

"The speaker complains of the place in which the Duchesse de Berry is detained. Would he allow perpetual civil war in la Vendée? That is doubtless not his idea, but one might reasonably interpret his views in that way, when he asks for the liberty of the Duchesse de Berry, seeing the use to which she put her liberty."

Next, the Ministre de l'Intérieur added a few words, saying that, even if the Château de Blaye were an unhealthy dwelling-place, it was a matter of public knowledge that the town had never been attacked by any sort of epidemic. He did not, therefore, understand the animosity of those persons who stated that the place of detention had been chosen with the intention of undermining the health of the august prisoner.

The incident led to nothing at all. The Chambre des Pairs, after the Duc de Fitz-James and M. de Chateaubriand's resignation, was nothing but a kind of record office where the laws of the Chambre des Députés were registered. Now, it came to pass, in spite of the Keeper of the Seal's statement and that made by the Ministre de l'Intérieur, that the health of the Duchesse de Berry soon caused enough uneasiness for the Government to dispatch MM. Orfila and Auvity to Blaye. Their departure was announced in a Government newspaper, *Le Nouvelliste*, I believe. It confined itself to saying that the two famous practitioners had to examine into an important question of forensic medicine. The vague curtness of the statement roused comments on all sides. *Le Nouvelliste*, being forced to give an explanation, inserted the following paragraph :—

" Many newspapers have printed a thousand conjectures as to the mission of MM. Orfila and Auvity at the Château de Blaye. That mission contains nothing to justify the multitude of comments to which it has given rise. *The condition of Madame la duchesse de Berry presents nothing to cause disquiet ; only, for some time, she has been sufficiently out of health* for it to be deemed advisable to afford her the opportunity of consulting the two men who are the most deserving of confidence, M. Orfila, doyen of the medical faculty, and M. Auvity, one of whom is her ordinary doctor and the other her consulting physician. The situation of the prison in which Madame la duchesse de Berry is confined necessitates this natural proceeding, and it is in that sense we called the mission of the two doctors *forensic*."

In consequence of this declaration, *Le Corsaire* surmised that the Duchesse de Berry's indisposition was that of pregnancy. The following day, a young Carlist, M. Barbot de la Trésorière, appeared at the offices of the paper to call the author of the article out in a duel or, failing the author, the responsible manager, M. Viennot. M. Viennot replied that he could only accept responsibility for the article in the event of the author not accepting

responsibility. He asked to be allowed a day before he could return an answer to M. Barbot de la Trésorière. That gentleman thought the request quite fair, but manifested a desire that the reply should be very definite, the aim of the Carlist party being to prevent any shadow of suspicion falling upon the reputation of the illustrious prisoner. Hardly had the last words been uttered before one of the editors of the *Corsaire* came out of the editorial office. He had heard everything and came up to M. de la Trésorière.

" Monsieur," he said to him, " I am the author of the article which you claim to regard as insulting. My name is Eugène Briffault and I am entirely at your disposition."

The duel acceded to, the rest of the affair was for the seconds to settle. The seconds had an interview and arranged that the meeting should take place next day at eight in the morning in the bois de Boulogne. At the agreed hour, the two adversaries met upon the ground. Pistols had been the weapons selected. The two adversaries were placed at a distance of thirty yards from one another : at the third clapping of hands they were to fire simultaneously. Both fired at the same instant. M. Briffault's bullet missed ; M. Barbot de la Trésorière's buried itself in M. Briffault's shoulder to such purpose that it could never be extracted. The wound was serious. M. Briffault was carried to Étienne Arago's, manager of the Vaudeville. It need hardly be said that there the injured man was nursed with brotherly devotion. And yet, on the very same day on which the duel had taken place, *La Quotidienne* contained the following passage :—

" 30 January—MM. Orfila and Auvity have just returned from Blaye, where they accomplished the mission with which they were entrusted. What that mission was, the Government does not say. But we will, because, with Madame, we think that it is a case where the sacrifice of the most sacred conventions is demanded by honour itself. "

"For about a week past, infamous rumours have been spread abroad concerning Madame's condition. Respectable people of all parties have heard them with disgust, and we owe it to truth to declare that the Liberal opposition has loudly pronounced its indignation. One does not imagine that those in authority are generally in ignorance of such shameless insinuations; one presumes that some, at all events, of those in authority are a party to the calumny; but it would not occur to any one that they were the first to be themselves the dupes. Base words were repeated, it is true, and especially by M. Thiers, but one could not believe in a miracle of stupid malignancy.

"Well, they were deceived; less guilty, if you like, but more inept than could be imagined; what they said they believed; you understand? Let us, however, pass rapidly over these shameful matters. We will restrict ourselves to showing to what excess of blindness certain men can be led astray when possessed by base passions. Thus, then, the two learned doctors went to the citadel of Blaye. Behold them in the presence of Madame! They stammer and try to speak; they speak; but they had not uttered three words before Madame understood them. Then it was (we report it from evidence which certainly cannot be questioned) that, under this ordeal, cruel for any woman, offensive to a woman of the blood royal, then it was, we say, that Madame rose, armed with her character, to a sublime effort, above common charges and vulgar susceptibilities. Calm, without apparent emotion, less agitated, probably, than the men before her, the princess addressed them powerfully; she spoke to their conscience, she invoked their sense of honour, called upon them to fulfil their mission *fully*, she demanded that their professional opinion should be pronounced fully, entirely, unquestionably; she wished that before God and men they should testify what they knew of the widow of the Duc de Berry, the mother of Henri v.! The two learned men obeyed Madame's commands; formed their opinion, found out all that it was necessary they should know and then withdrew, blushing for shame.

"A first report was rapidly dispatched to the men who had believed. . . . Hence, a clumsy disavowal, which we have printed with all the mistrust it is bound to inspire.

Authority dare not go further; it has not the courage to confess what it expected from the two professional men, or what it learnt from them."

The affair, as one can see, was begun by the Carlist party, both as an armed struggle and as written polemics, and it was entered into as boldly as possible. We shall see that it was upheld by the Republican party with equal ardour.

The report of MM. Auvity and Orfila, in fact, appeared in *Le Moniteur* of 5 February. It contained no particulars likely to establish opinion as to the supposed condition of the princess; so the newspapers continued to give rein to their conjectures. *Le Corsaire*, especially, stuck to its announcement of Madame's pregnancy. The upshot of it all was that a fresh challenge was made to her. *Le Corsaire* gave its readers the following information :—

"People have called at our offices to ask the reason for an article we recently published about the Duchesse de Berry. We replied that we did not recognise the right of any individual to call us to account in the name of the Duchesse de Berry, and we refused all information on the subject. We added that we were prepared even to accept the ill-will of the Legitimist party on this head. The word *slanderous* applied to the rumours spread about the duchess does not concern us: it belongs to those in high quarters, from whence the rumours have issued; their origin is now a matter of public notoriety. The editor of the article has expressly declared that he maintains that what he has written is *true*. Time alone can destroy or confirm his opinion. As for the political attitude of the Carlist party, which we have represented as thinking far more of conspiring than of fighting, we will call to mind the actual words of the prisoner of Blaye. When she saw the lists of those devoted to her, she exclaimed, 'They offer me their names, but not their arms!' That exclamation was reported only a month ago in a widely circulated paper and has not been denied.

"It is not the first but the second time that *Le Corsaire* has been exposed to such attacks, and one of its editors,

M. Briffault, has even had the misfortune of being wounded by a so-called Legitimist whose right he had recognised of taking up the cause on behalf of the prisoner of Blaye. It is rather singular that the susceptibility of the Carlist party concerning the princes of the fallen family has only shown itself since what they call the attempted defeat by the patriotic party in June. It is true that royalty boasts of having made the Republicans turn pale; but all royal personages were not, perhaps, vanquished on that day along with Louis-Philippe. True, again, many patriots were dispersed, banished, imprisoned, in consequence of those June days; but there are enough left outside prison for the champions of legitimacy to be certain of finding some one to deal with them at every opportunity; only, in disputing the honour of killing M. Briffault, they should have waited till his wound was first cured.

"It is, indeed, extraordinary, if one cannot write a single word about the Duchesse de Berry without having sword at hand when replying to everybody interested in making a heroine of her. Who amused themselves by breaking lances before the July Revolution, either for or against the virtue of the Duchesse de Berry? And yet, slanderous rumours, whether true or untrue, were not wanting then any more than now. But the duchess is a captive, she is under misfortune! This ought to make the hearts of her attendant cavaliers bleed; but, as for us, who remember only too vividly how she danced at the Tuileries whilst the heads of our friends were being cut off on the place de Grève, it must be acknowledged that consideration from our side can only proceed from motives of pure generosity.

"The Carlist party is taking a very bad way to procure the kindly feeling of the patriotic press for the prisoner of Blaye; it should suffice for them to wish to impose silence on us as to scandalous details, whether they exist or not; but, when they go on to talk so that we feel obliged to dwell on gossip, which it is our usual custom to ignore, certainly we will recognise these gentlemen's right to testify against us in their devotion to the person of the Duchesse de Berry in as large numbers as they please; they will find at our office a long enough list of people disposed to offer them every occasion for distinguishing themselves

which they may desire. These gentlemen must be counting much on the approach of a third Restoration for their devotion to begin to count, to allow themselves to be flung in prison, to insult the July Revolution by pamphlets, novels, signed protests, street processions, challenges addressed to patriotic papers; it would seem that the moment has arrived for proving the famous Republican-Carlist alliance. All right, that need not matter! Let the devoted knights state their numbers; let them but show themselves and get the question settled. In any case, we shall not go in search of persons to help us who take half-way views."

Such articles as these were not calculated to pacify political hatreds. *La Tribune* took up the cause of *Le Corsaire* and an ardent polemic took place between it and *Le Revenant*. The editor of the latter paper was then M. Albert de Calvimont, now préfet de l'empire. *Le National*, in its turn, interfered, and *Le Revenant* found itself confronted by three adversaries. M. Albert de Calvimont received a collective challenge for himself and his friends from *La Tribune*. He replied for himself personally, but declined to be implicated on the grounds they wished to impose upon him. At the same time, they replied to an aggressive article by Armand Carrel by sending him a list of a dozen persons from whom to select one name. The report soon went about amongst us that a challenging list asking for twelve opponents had been sent to Armand Carrel. I rushed off to Carrel; there was a crowd at his door to inscribe their names, and I wrote down mine as did the others. I had not seen Carrel for a long time; we were not personally on cool terms with one another; but *Le National* attacked the romantic school bitterly, and our intercourse had become infrequent. I probably owed the favour of being asked in to see him to the rarity of my visits. He was breakfasting with the charming lady of whom I have had occasion to speak, whose life, in the midst of all these riotings and duellings, was a perpetual torture, disguised beneath a smile of

easily detected sadness, but which was still a smile. As far as I can remember, Grégoire was at breakfast with them.

"Ah! so it is you!" Carrel said to me; "something very important must be on the way to bring you."

"What does it matter, dear friend, what circumstances cause my presence?"

"Have you come to fight?"

"I have come to do what I can . . . they told me you had received a list of twelve Carlists. If you are hard put to find a dozen Republicans, make use of me; I shall make one, at all events."

"But suppose I am in no such difficulty? . . ."

"Then, dear friend, excuse me from taking part in this row."

"You are not keen about it."

"I think the cause ridiculous."

"What! ridiculous?"

"Yes, in my opinion, you should wait in silence for official news from Blaye. The Duchesse de Berry is, first and foremost, a woman; and by what right do you say of a princess, because she is a princess, what you would not say of the widow of your grocer?"

"What is one to do?" said Carrel, who felt at heart and from the chivalrous point of view that I was right in my view of the question.

"I must go through with it."

"Have you sufficient force?"

"Pistols, yes—swordsmen, no . . ."

"Then you will fight with pistols?"

"No, I shall employ swords."

"Why do you arrange that?"

"It is a matter of sentiment, you see. I have twice fought with swords: twice I have pinked my enemy: I have only once fought with pistols, and, although my adversary shot very badly, and the bullet struck the

ground six yards off me, yet it went through the calf of my leg."

"Will you have a few rounds with me?"

"If you do not mind."

"Come then."

We went into a kind of saloon which contained foils and masks, and we placed ourselves on guard. I shot badly, as I have said—although Grisier, out of friendliness towards me, had spread my reputation as a good shot, thus sparing me more than one duel—only, at that time, having had occasion to do a small service to a good fellow called Castelli, who was a first-rate swordsman and served as teacher to all the celebrated masters, he had found no other means of satisfying himself about me than to come from time to time to give me a lesson. The result was that without being aware of it (his lessons were so excellent), I found I was better than I thought myself to be. As Grisier's pupil, I put myself on the defensive rather than attacked. Carrel gave me several lunges, which I avoided either by leaping aside or by parrying them. Carrel was easily carried away by excitement, and I felt that his exercise showed signs of great excitement.

"Take care," I said to him, "by such action as that on the ground you run great risk of being stopped short or touched during parry and thrust."

"True," he said, flinging away his foil; "but I am as fatalistic as a Mussulman: what will happen has been decreed beforehand."

"Do you think I draw well enough to put down my name?"

"Yes; but I will not put you down."

"Why not?"

"Because, although I have received a list and it has a dozen names on it, yet, from among that dozen names *Le National* has only to select one."

"Well?"

"I choose M. Roux-Laborie."

"Then you are going to fight?"

"Of course!" replied Carrel.

"When?"

"To-morrow."

"It is all settled?"

"Absolutely."

"I presume you have your seconds ready too?"

"Yes."

"Who are they?"

"Grégoire and d'Hervas."

"And you fight with? . . ."

"Swords. Like you, I am better with the pistol than the sword; but I confess I have a weakness for swords; with the sword, one defends one's life; with the pistol, one renounces it."

"So you do not need me?"

"No."

"Not for anything?"

"No thanks."

"Good luck, dear friend!"

Carrel shrugged his shoulders as much as to say: "That will be as God pleases!"

I went home, where I found two of my friends waiting in readiness to offer themselves to me in case I was on the list. I told them of Carrel's decision. He was so absolutely brave that it surprised no one that he made himself the champion of the Republic, although he was a strange sort of Republican, and took the duel upon himself.

Meanwhile, that is to say on 1 February 1833, the reply of M. Albert de Calvimont was taken to *La Tribune* by MM. Albert Berthier and Théodore Anne, commissioned to uphold the struggle on personal lines, the only grounds on which M. Albert de Calvimont would accept. There was a lengthy debate between the two seconds of M. Albert de Calvimont and M. Marrast, to whom M. de Calvimont's reply was addressed. M. Marrast, surrounded by all his friends, urged on by them, wanted a real battle, wherein

the strength of the two parties should be tested. M. de Calvimont's friends, on their side, could only offer the duel, all other agreements exposing them to a charge of recantation. In the mdidle of the debate, a communication arrived from *Le National*: it announced the challenge received by Carrel. They conferred together and decided that no engagement ought to be made before knowing what Carrel would do. For the time being, therefore, they confined themselves to showing the communication to M. de Calvimont's two seconds and to adjourning the discussion until night. By then, Carrel's decision was known : he had chosen M. Roux-Laborie, junior, not only because he was a Royalist but, still more, because he was the son of a man who had an interest in the *Journal des Débats*, a paper devoted to the Royalist cause of July. The details of the duel were settled between MM. Grégoire and d'Hervas, Carrel's seconds, and Théodore Anne and Albert Berthier, M. Roux-Laborie's seconds. Carrel, as instigator, had the choice of arms, and chose swords. Next day, Saturday, 2 February (the day of the first performance of *Lucrèce Borgia*), M. Roux-Laborie, accompanied by MM. Berthier and Théodore Anne, presented themselves at the barrière de Clichy, where, almost immediately afterwards, Armand Carrel arrived, supported by M. d'Hervas, capitaine de chasseurs, and by Grégoire. The two adversaries each stayed in their carriages whilst the seconds got out and conferred together. Then arose an incident amongst the seconds, which, in the case of a man other than brave and loyal Carrel, would have been made the occasion for giving up the duel. M. Roux-Laborie's seconds, with instructions received from the leaders of the Carlist party, declared that their friend was ready to answer his challenge ; but that he desired to fight with some other than Carrel, seeing that the feelings the Legitimists had for the chief editor of *Le National* were much more those of gratitude than of hatred, Carrel having, before the Assises of Blois, by his open and loyal evidence,

saved the life of one of their party, M. de Chièvres, accused of participation in the affairs of la Vendée. Carrel, on that occasion, had done for M. de Chièvres, in 1832, what M. de Chièvres did for Carrel when he was accused in 1823 of plotting against the State.

"If Carrel were wounded," said MM. Théodore Anne and Albert Berthier, "there would be mourning in both the camps, whilst if, on the contrary, M. Roux-Laborie were hit, there would only be grief in one camp, and the match would not be equal."

From every motive M. Roux-Laborie's seconds demand the substitution of Carrel for some other person, whomsoever they liked. M. Roux-Laborie was ready to accept that person whoever it might be.

These observations were transmitted to Carrel. He got down out of his carriage, came up to the seconds and thanked them for their complimentary remarks about himself, but he declared, at the same time, that he was not in the habit of being replaced; he had come to fight and meant to fight. Carrel's resolution was positive and they had to give in to him. They entered their carriages and went in search of a spot suitable for the encounter; they went far before they found it. At last they stopped behind a factory near the île Saint-Ouen. Until then they had found the ground too damp and slippery; there, alone, was the earth solid on account of the deposit of pit-coal. The two adversaries then dismounted from their carriages, bowed politely and put themselves on guard. The engagement was short and sharp. After two or three passes, they both lunged simultaneously. Carrel's sword merely penetrated M. Roux-Laborie's arm. The seconds stopped the duel crying, "There is a wound!"

They went up to M. Roux-Laborie.

"I, too, am wounded," Carrel quietly observed, putting his hand to his abdomen at the same time.

Whilst M. Roux-Laborie's doctor, M. Bouché-Dugua,

was dressing his patient, Dumont, Carrel's doctor, discovered a serious injury to the groin. M. Roux-Laborie was able to be taken away in a carriage, but it was impossible to move Carrel. They ran to the factory and got a mattress which they stretched on the shafts of a cart they found ready at hand, then they placed Carrel on the mattress and his seconds, helped by M. Roux-Laborie's friends, who had remained with them, carried the wounded man to the factory, where they hastened to render him a hospitable reception. Dumont bled Carrel, but his condition was too grave to allow him to be driven to Paris; that would have risked a fatal accident, the movement of the carriage would have led to hæmorrhage. One of M. Roux-Laborie's seconds ran to Clichy and brought back a stretcher, upon which they could take Carrel to his house in the rue Blanche. They sent off quickly for M. Dupuytren, who rushed there. The injury was serious, the sword had gone in nearly three inches, and had penetrated the liver; they could not yet predict the upshot of the accident.

The same night the report of the event spread throughout Paris with the rapidity of bad news. You must have lived at that period of excitement and enthusiasm to have an idea of the magic which attached to the name of Carrel. On the morrow, the duel and its details filled the leading articles of every newspaper. We open the first to hand by chance—*Le Corsaire*—and we read—

"2 *February* 1833.—It is with inexpressible grief that all fair-minded persons learnt yesterday the news of the wound received by M. Armand Carrel, in a duel with M. Roux-Laborie, one of the Legitimists whose names were sent to *Le National*. But it is quite impossible to give any idea of the indignation and sorrow of patriots upon learning this deplorable event, of Carlists especially, who, by reason of our activity, need not have been driven to despair; what we should have done as a duty, we now fulfil as a sacred obligation. M. Armand Carrel is by virtue of his fine talent, his noble strength of character, by the renown and usefulness of the services he has ren-

dered, and, above all, by the detestation which he has expressed against the enemies of our liberties, is one of those men whose youth has already been a credit to the country. The party which has struck him down has not as much wealth as M. Carrel. Obeying a generous impulse, whilst his reason, at the same time, was opposed to an unjust attack, he acceded to a duel on behalf of the sad cause in which we are now engaged. He was injured in the groin by a sword, but his condition is not past hope, and M. Dupuytren, who went to him, confirms the seriousness of the wound without giving up hope. There is such a splendid future before M. Carrel that we cannot harbour the distressing idea that it may soon terminate. He is one of those men who seem bound up with the destiny of his country. He showed touching sympathy when misfortune struck down one of our friends in the same cause, and we shall not cease to follow him with our gratitude and devotion and with the patriotism which he taught so well, of which he has given us such a fine example."

The whole of Paris called to inquire at Carrel's house. Amongst the twenty first names written in the visitors' book were La Fayette, Chateaubriand, Béranger, Thiers and Dupin. The society *Aide-toi et le Ciel t'aidera*, appointed a committee of three members to go, in the name of the whole society, to inscribe their names and express their sympathy for the loyal and courageous conduct he had displayed throughout the affair. The committee was composed of MM. Thiard, Lariboissière and Lemercier, of the Institut. On the night of the day when the duel took place, M. Albert Berthier, one of M. Roux-Laborie's seconds, received the following letter from M. d'Hervas :—

"Monsieur,—It is with profound regret that, in exchange for your good and generous action of this morning, I feel myself compelled to ask you to fix a duel for to-morrow. M. Carrel is the man I love and revere most in the world. He is seriously wounded, and honour demands that I avenge him. Your obliging conduct of

this morning alone kept the request from my lips that I now make you. I know you to be a man of honour, and am certain you will understand me. I spend the night with M. Carrel, where I shall expect your reply to-morrow morning. Choose the arms, place of meeting and time; but I desire that our encounter should take place during the day, for I am obliged to return at night to my regiment.—Accept my respectful greetings,

"D'HERVAS"

On Sunday morning M. d'Hervas received this reply—

"3 *February* 1833

"SIR,—The police have seized me, and I have only time to reply that, for the moment, it is impossible for me to respond to your challenge. You will understand my situation.—Yours, etc., ALBERT BERTHIER"

A letter pretty nearly in the same terms as that to M. Berthier was written by M. Grégoire to Théodore Anne. But, like M. Albert Berthier, Théodore Anne had also been arrested. He was therefore obliged to postpone the meeting. But, in order that it should be clearly known that only *force majeure* could hinder the proposed duels, the Republican party inserted the following paragraph in the newspapers, as a public answer to the letters of MM. Berthier and Théodore Anne:—

"We keenly regret, gentlemen, that arrest or a threatened arrest does not permit you to reply to the letter we wrote you yesterday; we hope, as much as you yourselves can do so, that a speedy liberation will allow you to respond to our challenge. However, we will gladly accept in the meantime any Legitimists you may be pleased to substitute until you are yourselves ready.

"D'HERVAS, GRÉGOIRE"

It will be seen that the tourney was fully begun and in good earnest. The arrest of MM. Berthier and Théodore Anne only, as one might imagine, exasperated the two parties all the more. The real enemy throughout, as both Carlists and patriots thoroughly realised, was the

Government of Louis-Philippe. The following letter was addressed to the editors of the *Revenant*:—

"GENTLEMEN,—We look upon your remarks of yesterday in the *National* and *Tribune* as a direct challenge. You refused our challenge yesterday; to-day, after what has just happened between MM. Armand Carrel and Roux-Laborie, we adhere more closely than ever to upholding our views and to the pursuit of your party BY ALL METHODS to gain a just and public reparation. We send you a preliminary list of twelve persons, since yesterday you spoke of twelve on your side. We do not demand a dozen duels simultaneously, but successively, and in the time and places most convenient to you. No excuse, no pretext would save you from cowardice, nor from the subsequent consequences of such cowardice. Henceforth, the first duel will be the declaration of war between your side and ours. There shall be no truce until one of the two has succumbed to the other—

"ARMAND MARRAST
"GODEFROY CAVAIGNAC
"GARDARIN"

Then came the names of twelve patriots. A similar letter was addressed to the offices of *La Quotidienne*. It was signed by Ambert, Guinard and by M. Thévenin. At the same time, Germain Sarrut, supported by MM. Delsart and Saint-Edme, went to M. de Genoude, who replied to the explanations demanded—

"MONSIEUR,—The editors of *La Gazette* officially disapprove of the conduct of the men of their party who have incited the contributors of the different newspapers, and they consequently refuse to take any part *whatsoever* in the quarrel raised between the two parties."

La Quotidienne, in its turn, wrote the following letter in reply to that of Ambert, Guinard and Thévenin—

"M. de Montfort, M. de Calvimont and others, being arrested, or under the pressure of a warrant, the business of the letter from the gentlemen of the *National* cannot be attended to for the moment—3 February."

This letter was received on the 4th. On the 5th the patriotic papers contained the following paragraph:—

"The letters addressed yesterday by our friends to the champions of the legitimacy have been supported to-day by overtures made by several of them to those gentlemen to induce them to take definite action and not to prolong a situation which hitherto has been neither an acceptance nor a formal refusal. It now appears that equivocation is at an end. They do not accept the challenge."

Meantime, various duels took place. On 2 February, preoccupied by the first representation of *Lucrèce Borgia*, I had only put in but a brief appearance at the *National*; they did not yet know the result of the meeting there. I found one of my friends there, M. de Beauterne, an impulsive and excitable character. He came to put his name down; but, learning that the list was closed, he decided to act on his own account. We returned together, and he came up to my rooms, asked me for a pen, paper and ink and wrote to Nettement, the editor of *La Quotidienne*, offering him a meeting. He urged me strongly to do the same; but it was a difficult enough matter for me; Republican though I was, I certainly had more friends amongst the Carlists than among the Republicans. He was so insistent that I had no way of getting out of it. So I took up my pen and wrote—

"My dear Beauchene,—If your party is as silly as mine, and compels you to fight, I ask you, in preference to another, delighted as I shall ever be to give you a proof of my esteem, in default of a proof of friendship.—Yours always, Alex. Dumas"

Beauterne pushed his complacency to the point of himself undertaking to deliver the letter. Beauchene was in the country, and not expected to return for a week or ten days; but his concierge was deputed to forward him the letter. On 4 February, the meeting offered by Beauterne to Nettement took place, and the latter re-

ceived a sword cut across the arm. The bulletins which came to us of Carrel's health were satisfactory. No one was allowed to enter his room except the devoted creature who never left him, and M. Dupuytren, who came to see him twice a day. On 5 February, *Le Revenant* appeared as blank paper : a note of half a line announced that all its contributors had been arrested. On the 9th, they arrested M. Sarrut. The same day I received a letter from Beauchene : he was detained for a few days longer in the country ; but, as soon as he returned, he would put himself at my disposal. However, there was no means of fighting, for each of us had a police spy after us, who stuck to us like our shadows. On the 9th, Carrel was well enough for several of his friends to be allowed in his room. I went with two or three others : M. Dupuytren was there : it was the first time I had seen him. He held forth upon the speedy and easy cure of sword cuts, and promised Carrel he should be on his feet again in another week.

A month before, this is what had happened to the famous doctor : a paymaster had played and lost a considerable sum taken from the regimental exchequer ; when he returned home he saw no other alternative but the galleys or death. He chose death. Then, with prodigious *sang-froid*, after writing down his reason for suicide, he drew his sword, leant the hilt against the wall, with the point to his breast, took a step forward and the sword penetrated six inches. He continued to push till the sword had gone in a foot . . . still he went on pushing ; the hilt of the sword, as they say in barrack-room parlance, had acted as a plaster. In spite of all he still remained upright. Then remorse seized upon him ; the desire for life overtook him and he rang for his servant ; only, as he felt weak, he seated himself astride a chair whilst he waited for the servant. In this position, the latter found his master when he entered ; at first, he did not understand the situation and did not notice the hilt of

the sword against his master's breast, and the eighteen inches of steel coming out from between his shoulders.

"Go and fetch M. Dupuytren," said the officer.

The servant began to ask what was the matter.

"Go! go!" the officer repeated. "*Sacrebleu!* Can't you see there is no time to lose!"

The officer grew deadly pale; there was a pool of blood at his feet.

The servant saw there was, indeed, no time to lose and he rushed off to M. Dupuytren. When M. Dupuytren arrived, the wounded man had slipped down in the chair and was laid in a faint over the side. M. Dupuytren drew out the sword with the greatest precaution, applied a twofold bandage and, seeing a written paper, took possession of it: the cause of the suicide was then explained to him. With the paper he found a banker, and the latter gave the officer the 150 louis he had lost. On the evening of the day upon which M. Dupuytren related this to us, the officer had got up and was able to go to his desk. When he opened the drawer, he found the 150 louis.

The man was saved twice over.

Whilst Carrel was advancing to recovery, as M. Dupuytren had predicted, preventative arrests were being continued; but, on 14 February, the Council Chamber found the seconds of M. Roux-Laborie and of MM. Albert Berthier and Théodore Anne not guilty, and they were set at liberty. The first use these gentlemen made of their liberty was to place themselves at the disposal of MM. d'Hervas and Achille Grégoire; only, not wanting to enter upon this succession of duels as a mere matter of principle, they chose their seconds from among the Republicans. Thus, MM. Mathieu and Alexis Dumesnil were M. Berthier's seconds, and Étienne Arago and Anténor Joly those of M. Théodore Anne. But, on the morning of the 15th, MM. Théodore Anne and Albert Berthier received this letter, written by Carrel in duplicate. We have the one addressed to Théodore Anne.

"PARIS, 15 *February* 1833

"SIR,—I have learnt with keen satisfaction that to-day you have at last been allowed to return to your business affairs and to your friends. I cannot protest too energetically against the motive upon which they dared to found your arbitrary detention; but I particularly want to tell you, sir, how very sensible I have been to the attentions heaped upon me by your generous loyalty at a time when I might have feared to have no claim upon it except the sorrow and active solicitude of my seconds and friends. In this perilous moment, it has been difficult for me to distinguish between the devotion of friends who desired to uphold my cause and share my dangers, and the generous courtesy of the men of honour whom M. Roux-Laborie had selected for seconds. Be sure, sir, I have noticed everything even during the time when sharp suffering seemed to obliterate my light, and I shall never forget the assiduous attentions with which you have lavished upon me personally. I need hardly tell you, sir, how sorry I was that my seconds thought it their duty, yielding to the impulse of the moment, to seek out you and M. Berthier to be their opponents; for the future, I can only count you among the number of people who wish me well, and to whom I in return wish well. Accept this assurance, and believe me, Your most devoted Servant,

"CARREL"

The same day, Carrel came out of doors and went to *La Tribune*, to *Le National*, and to pay a call on M. Roux-Laborie, whose wound was much less serious than that of his adversary, but was healing much more slowly, and still kept him to his bedroom. Finally, after Carrel's letter, no further duels were possible. On 17 February, the Republican newspapers contained the following paragraph:—

"17 *February*.—It will be remembered that after the duel between MM. Carrel and Roux-Laborie, M. Carrel's seconds addressed a challenge to the seconds of M. Laborie, MM. Albert Berthier and Théodore Anne. As is known, these two gentlemen had been placed under arrest, charged with inciting to murder. That accusation having been

abandoned, MM. Albert Berthier and Théodore Anne were bound, on recovering their liberty, to warn M. Carrel's seconds that they were now at their disposition; they had added that, not wishing a meeting between them to assume a political character, they chose their seconds from among the political friends of M. Carrel's seconds. The seconds of both sides, having met together, have decided that they could not allow any sequel to this affair to take place, since, on behalf of MM. Berthier and Théodore Anne, the question of the political aspect is abandoned, and the challenge of MM. d'Hervas and Achille Grégoire was only prompted by the danger M. Armand Carrel might then incur, a danger happily and speedily dissipated. Things being in this state, the undersigned seconds decree that any collision between the friends of MM. Armand Carrel and Laborie, when the reasons thereof no longer exist, would be unjustifiable in the light of reason and of honour.

"AMBERT, GUINARD, GRÉGOIRE LECOCQ, ORANNE, seconds to MM. D'HERVAS and ACHILLE GRÉGOIRE; MATHIEU and ALEXIS DUMESNIL, ÉTIENNE ARAGO, ANTÉNOR JOLY, seconds to MM. BERTHIER and THÉODORE ANNE"

On the 14th, as we said, MM. Théodore Anne and Albert Berthier had been set at liberty. On the 15th, Beauchene returned from the country and informed me of his arrival. The following day, our seconds conferred together; but, as I have said, after Carrel's letter, no more duels were possible. Besides, the rumour of the Duchesse de Berry's pregnancy, without being officially declared, began to take a serious complexion. No one any longer had doubts on the subject, when, in the official column of the *Moniteur* of 26 February, one read—

"On Friday, 22 February, at half-past five o'clock, Madame la duchesse de Berry handed to M. le général Bugeaud, governor of the citadel of Blaye, the following declaration:—

"'Compelled by circumstances and by the measures ordered by the Government, although I have the gravest

reasons for keeping my marriage secret, I think it due to myself as well as to my children to declare that I was married secretly during my stay in Italy.

" ' CITADEL OF BLAYE, 22 *February* 1833.

Signed: " ' MARIE-CAROLINE '

" This declaration, transmitted by M. le général Bugeaud to M. le président du Conseil, Ministre de la guerre, has been placed at once among the archives of the chancellerie de France."

Not one word concerning Her Royal Highness's pregnancy was suggested in those lines; but one felt perfectly sure that they had only been written on account of her condition. Furthermore, only two and a half months later, the name of the Duchesse de Berry's new husband was officially pronounced in the official report of the accouchement. Here is that report, a curious sequel to that which was addressed to the Tuileries on the day of the birth of the Duc de Bordeaux :—

" On 10 May 1833, at half-past three in the morning :

" We the undersigned,—THOMAS-ROBERT BUGEAUD, membre de la chambre des députés, maréchal de camp, commandant supérieur de Blaye; ANTOINE DUBOIS, professeur honoraire à la faculté de médecine de Paris; CHARLES-FRANÇOIS MARCHAND-DUBREUIL, sous-préfet de l'arrondissement de Blaye; DANIEL-THÉOTIME PASTOUREAU, président du tribunal de première instance de Blaye; PIERRE NADAUD, procureur du roi près le même tribunal; GUILLAUME BELLON, président du tribunal de commerce, adjoint au maire de Blaye; CHARLES BORDES, commandant de la garde nationale de Blaye; ÉLIE DESCRAMBES, curé de Blaye; PIERRE-CAMILLE DELORD, commandant de la place de Blaye; CLAUDE-OLIVIER DUFRESNE, commissaire civil du gouvernement à la citadelle; witnesses called at the request of General Bugeaud to be present at the accouchement of Her Royal Highness Marie-Caroline, princesse des Deux-Siciles, duchesse de Berry (MM. MERLET, maire de Blaye, Regnier juge de paix, witnesses

equally called, being at that time absent in the country and unable to be present), state that we were taken to the citadel of Blaye and into the house inhabited by Her Royal Highness, where we were introduced to a salon next to the room in which the princess was confined.

"M. le docteur Dubois, M. le général Bugeaud and M. Delord, commandant de la place, were in the salon from the first labour-pangs; they declared to the other witnesses that Madame la duchesse de Berry had just been delivered at three o'clock, that they had seen her receive the attention of docteurs Deneux and Menière, M. Dubois having remained in the room until the child was born. M. le général Bugeaud went in to ask Madame la duchesse if she wished to receive the witnesses; she replied, 'Yes, as soon as the child has been washed and dressed.' A few minutes later, Madame d'Hautefort appeared in the salon and invited the witnesses to enter on behalf of the duchesse, and we immediately did so.

"We found the Duchesse de Berry laid in her bed with a new-born infant on her left; at the foot of her bed sat Madame d'Hautefort; Madame Hansler, MM. Deneux and Menière were standing at the head of the bed.

"M. le président Pastoureau then approached the princesse and addressed the following questions to her in a loud voice—

"'Have I the honour of speaking to Madame la duchesse de Berry?'

"'Yes.'

"'You are really Madame la duchesse de Berry?'

"'Yes, monsieur.'

"'Is the child just born lying by you yours?'

"'Yes, monsieur, it is mine.'

"'What sex is it?'

"'It is of the feminine sex. I have deputed M. Deneux to declare that fact.'

"Then Louis-Charles Deneux, docteur de médecine, ex-professeur de clinique d'accouchement de la faculté de Paris, titular member of the Académie royale de médecine, made the following declaration:—

"'I have just delivered Madame la duchesse de Berry, here present, wife in lawful wedlock of Comte Hector de Lucchesi-Palli, a prince of the House of Campo-Franco,

gentleman of the chamber to the King of the Two Sicilies, domiciled at Palermo.'

"M. le Comte de Brissac and Madame la Comtesse d'Hautefort, asked by us if they would sign the statement of the event of which they had been witnesses, replied that they had come here to attend to the Duchesse de Berry as friends but not to sign any sort of document.

"In respect of all this we have drawn up the present report, in three copies, one to be deposited in our presence in the archives of the citadel, while the other two have been placed with M. le général Bugeaud, governor, whom we have charged to hand them to the Government, duly signed after being read over, on the day, month and year dated above."

In our opinion, Madame la duchesse de Berry did a graver wrong than by marrying M. le Comte de Lucchesi-Palli, noble and loyal Sicilian gentleman as he was, whose family I had the honour to become acquainted with during my travels in Sicily. That wrong was in signing the declaration of 22 February and the legal document of her accouchement on 10 May 1833; no human power could have compelled her to do so, and the opposition against the Government was such, at that period, that every official bit of paper not signed by Madame la duchesse de Berry could be, if not out of good faith, at least successfully, repudiated as apocryphal. Between the denial of the Carlist party and the affirmation of the moderate party, public opinion would have been left in a state of indecision.

Thus was one of the most heated periods of the beginning of the reign of Louis-Philippe frustrated. It had a real advantage, because it brought the Carlist party and the Republican closer together, not in opinion so much as from respect. MM. Théodore Anne and Berthier, by joining hands with MM. d'Hervas and Grégoire, whilst Carrel was crossing swords with M. Roux-Laborie, gave that proof of esteem to which I referred when talking to Beauchene, which is given among enemies in default of a proof of friendship.

CHAPTER II

Lucrèce Borgia—Discouragement—First conception of the Historical Romances

IN the midst of all this a great literary event had happened. Victor Hugo had had his first prose drama, *Lucrèce Borgia*, performed at the théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin. It is difficult to believe it, but it is a fact, that during this stormy atmosphere literature sprang to life, and grew and increased from flower to fruit.

The play was splendidly put on. Georges and Frédérick played the principal parts. It contained powerfully moving passages, and had an immense success. Let us state that we owe this glowing picture of a portion of the life of the Duchesse d'Este to the absence of the censorship.

From the night of 2 February 1833 began the real life of the author of *Lucrèce Borgia* and of *Orientales*, as it appeared in his representation of his beautiful drama, *Marion Delorme*. You, lovely Princess Negroni, know what we mean, you, in whom he discovered the love and devotion that blessed every hour of his life in this his natal land as also in foreign lands.

Ah! dear Comtesse Dash, you may rightly say that, unluckily, the most interesting facts of these Memoirs are those which I cannot write down!

I witnessed the fresh success of Victor Hugo with great delight—although *friends* had thrown some clouds across our early friendship—a joy all the greater as, having temporarily renounced the theatre myself, Hugo at that period represented the whole school.

Why had I renounced it? One experiences moments of lassitude and of disgust in life, quite beyond one's own control. I was passing through such a period. I had been deeply hurt—not by the failure of the *Fils de l'Émigré*, for the play was poor; it had justly failed. I acknowledge and submit to the hard lessons which the public give an author—this simplicity, let us remark in passing, is a part of my strength—but, in the simplicity of my heart, I did not understand the fury of the Press against me. They indeed knew one thing—or rather two—

That I had fallen ill during the second or third act of the work; that I had left France in consequence of the troubles of June—namely, at the beginning of the rehearsals; that, finally, I was hardly responsible for a third of the work, and they attacked me concerning my five or six preceding successes. No wonder I was staggered. But, in other ways, this retiring into my shell, which I am not so presumptuous to compare with that of Achilles, was of great advantage with respect to my literary life, which it spliti nto two divisions. Without the failure of the *Fils de l'Émigré*, and the explosion of hatred which followed it, I should probably never have done anything but theatrical work. On the contrary, during the year's silence which I kept with regard to the stage, I published my first impressions of my travels, which was very successful among the booksellers, and I prepared my volume entitled, *Gaule et France*, an unfinished but wonderful book, wherein the double vision of poet supplements the knowledge of the historian. Then, too, this latter work, which absorbed me completely, by precipitating me into the intoxication of unknown matters, was of still greater advantage to me than to the public for which I intended it: it did not teach the public much, but it taught me a great deal. I was, I repeat, profoundly ignorant in history. When I began a historical drama, I did not investigate the whole century in which my heroes had lived, but merely the two or three years

during which my action took place and the event which formed the catastrophe of the drama was accomplished. I made a hole after the fashion of well-sinkers; I dived like fishermen. True, by dint of digging, I sometimes brought up an ingot of gold; by diving, I at times came to the surface with a pearl; but it was merely chance. The studies I was compelled to make about the French Monarchy, from Cæsar's invasion of the Gauls to the invasion of the French Republic in Europe, unfolded before my eyes that magnificent continuity of eighteen centuries wrongly styled the history of France, under Charlemagne, Philippe-Auguste, François I., Louis XIV. and Napoleon, which has become the history of the world. I viewed with amazement the marvellous advantage there was to be derived from these changes of dynasty and of morals and of customs. I made acquaintance with the men who summed up a reign, with the men who summed up a century, with those, also, who represented a period. I saw appear, like meteors lost to the vulgar gaze in the night of time, those rare chosen spirits of Providence which pass with fire on their brows, bearing the thoughts of God, unconscious themselves of what they carry and not realising their mission until they go to render up their account to Him who bestowed it upon them.

I confess I was at first dazzled before this awful Sinai, its summit thundered upon by the superb trinity of the men we call Cæsar, Charlemagne and Napoleon. I then understood that there was to be done for this great and beauteous France what Walter Scott had done for poor little Scotland. an illustrated, picturesque and dramatic story of the past—a bringing to life again of all the great dead—a kind of last judgment of all those who had worn a crown, whether of laurels, of flowers or of gold. But, I admit, if I had been dazzled by this historical revelation, I was overwhelmed by the work it imposed on the historian, and I fell prostrate, saying to myself: Happy indeed is the man who shall accomplish this gigantic mission!

but God knows full well I have not the vanity to imagine it will be mine.

Yet I proceeded with my work with a growing courage, amidst the doubts and laughter of all my friends. When I meet some one whom I have not seen for some time, he will say to me—

"So it is you!"

"Yes, it is I. What is there surprising in that?"

"I thought you were dead."

"Why?"

"Because you have been doing nothing."

"Who told you that?"

"Why! nobody is talking of you."

"I have written a book."

"Ah yes! your *Impressions de Voyages*. I read that, it was very funny; you're a fine joker."

"Why am I a joker?"

"Would you have me believe that you have tasted bear's flesh and caught trout with a bill-hook?"

"Of course, there is absolutely nothing else in my *Impressions de Voyages*. But I am writing a history now."

"You write a history! You are wrong."

"Why so?"

"Stick to drama, my dear fellow; you know you are dramatic through and through."

"Does it therefore follow that because, as you say, I am dramatic before everything else I ought not to write drama? Is there nothing dramatic outside the stage, and could one not put drama into a novel?"

"A novel! You want to do a romance after the style of Walter Scott?"

"Why not?"

But my interlocutor shook his head.

"Walter Scott has depicted localities, characters, manners; you must take the novel from Walter Scott's hands, as Raphael took art from Perugino's, and add the passions."

"If I were you—though I have no advice to offer you—I would stick to the theatre."

"Let me try."

"Oh! you are a free agent!"

So my questioner left me with a shrug of his shoulders, as much as to say, "There goes another to destruction!"

Am I lost, or have I, as I said Raphael did to Perugino, taken romance from the hands of Walter Scott to give him a push forward? Have I taught a little of the history of my country to my contemporaries by causing them to read *la Comtesse de Salysbury, le Bâtard de Mauléon, Isabeau de Bavière, Jehanne la Pucelle, Ascanio, la Reine Margot, la Dame de Montsoreau, les Quarante-Cinq, les Trois Mousquetaires, Vingt ans après, le Vicomte de Bragelonne, le Chevalier d'Harmental, la Fille du Régent, Balsamo, le Collier de la Reine, Ange Pitou, la Comtesse de Charny et le Chevalier de Maison-Rouge?* The future must decide. In any case, the metamorphosis of the dramatic poet into a romance-writer dates from 1833, and the probable cause was the failure of the *Fils de l'Émigré*.

CHAPTER III

Condition of the Théâtre-Français in 1832 and 1833—Causes which had led to our emigration from the Théâtre-Français—Reflections concerning the education of dramatic artists

IN one of the preceding volumes of these *Souvenirs*, we amused ourselves by enumerating the plays that the Théâtre-Français acted in 1830 to 1834, whilst the Porte-Saint-Martin was playing *Antony*, *Marion Delorme*, *Richard*, *La Tour de Nesle*, *Lucrèce Borgia*, *Marie Tudor* and *Angèle*. Two of these plays were to pass to the Théâtre-Français without any other advertisement except their failure. They were *Guido Reni* and *Le Presbytère*. *Caïus Gracchus*, by Théodore Dartois, and *Clarisse Harlowe*, by Denain, my collaborator in *Richard Darlington*, had followed the first two dramas without turning the ill-fortune which seemed to be attached to the theatre. There was genuine despair in the rue de Richelieu: the last days of Mademoiselle Mars were wasted in failures. She had, indeed, acted in *Guido Reni* and in *Clarisse Harlowe* without being able to give more than a few touches of life to these two works. In other ways there began, between the dramatic school of 1828 and the Théâtre-Français, the spirit of antagonism which has lasted until to-day, even after my having given my *Henri III.* and Hugo his *Hernani* to the Théâtre-Français. This stupid opposition, which we felt to be permanently against us, half arising from the administration and half from society itself, had induced us to desert it. In fact, with the restrictive conditions by which the Théâtre-

Français was bound, it could play neither *Christine* nor *Richard*, nor *La Tour de Nesle*, nor *Lucrèce Borgia*. Now, why could these plays not be acted? It is a difficult matter to explain. Why cannot certain plants which flourish splendidly in other latitudes grow in such or such another kind of climate? They need atmosphere.

Well! it must be admitted that the Théâtre-Français has its own atmosphere, in which certain forms of art, the picturesque and the poetic, cannot thrive. Now this very picturesque and poetic side, which was unable to accommodate itself to the jog-trot routine of the theatre of the rue de Richelieu, was just what constituted the splendid efflorescence of dramatic art. It must be admitted that, before the rise of the Modern School, this side of dramatic art was totally unknown in France; it came from abroad. It had its origins in Æschylus, its development in Shakespeare and Goethe and Schiller. As we have seen, it rose again to the fore at the beginning of the dramatic world. We felt instinctively that something would be eternally missing in French art so long as it did not manage to graft upon itself this exotic art. It was the same as with the gardens in our parks, the authorities of which, when they had transformed them after the periods of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., were no longer satisfied with lime-trees cut in arcades, yews cut in pyramids, chestnut trees cut in lines like a chess-board, but felt the need for designing them on new plans, and of adding to the classical and national trees the American magnolia, the sumachs of Japan, the paulownia of China. What we wanted to do, in short, in dramatic art, was something after the style of the garden of the Petit-Trianon, as opposed to the Versailles. Winding paths, massive trees of all shades of foliage and flower, running water, as in the Alps or Pyrenees, lawns and mossy places as in England and Ireland. Then, instead of eternally following the regular path which, without episode or surprise, leads straight to the end foreseen from the first step, one could lose oneself,

find one's way again and, in fact, pass through every emotion of that art which is all the greater in that it conceals itself behind nature to the point of making believe that it does not exist. Imagine gardeners who were capable of endowing your horizons with palms with moving plumes, banana trees with huge leaves, bamboos with flexible slender stems, to whom you refused entrance to your gardens because the stateliness of your oaks, the serious look of your limes and the proud bearing of your yews could not endure the proximity of the new-comers; would not those gardeners thus repulsed by you have the right to make their winter gardens elsewhere? Very well! that is just the very situation in which we found ourselves with regard to the Théâtre-Français. The vicinity of Molière, that lime-tree with sweet scented flowers, hovered over by numbers of humming bees; Corneille, the majestic oak which covers the seventeenth century with its shade; and Racine, that agreeable, evergreen yew, cut to suit the taste of the Court of Louis XIV., was, they said, degraded by us. Being gods as jealous as Jehovah, they wanted to keep their sky pure from contact with those other gods, by name Shakespeare, Calderon, Schiller and Goethe. Hence arose the administrative opposition, supported in its absolutism by literary criticism. Nothing is so repugnant to literary criticism as admiration for the living. Remember the dialogue reply to criticism which Molière gives, and Corneille's humble prefaces apropos of Nicomède. Think of Racine's bitter recriminations with respect to Andromaque. Well then, the three men who stand for the dramatic trinity in the religion of modern art, these men who, with good reason, were held to be as gods equal to the Roman Cæsars, could apparently only become divine by dying. Now criticism said to the young poets—Outside the art of Louis XIV. is no salvation. Criticism well knew that that art was dead, because, indeed, it was exhausted by having borne such splendid fruits as *Tartufe*, *Horace*, *Britannicus*. It knew full well that the

scathing spirit of Molière against a state of society which no longer exists could not be met with again; nor the thoughtful style of Corneille, son of the League and of the Fronde; nor the suave complacency of Racine, rewarded by a glance from Lavallière, or punished by a word from Louis XIV.—these could none of them be revived. It knew that all this had died with the men themselves, and could not be revived after them in other individualities, placed in contact with other epochs, customs and men. Because it knew that all this spirit was dead, entirely dead, it asked us to resuscitate it.

It was pointed out that academic methods of galvanism applied to corpses might, occasionally, make a dead body tremble; but between that and the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus, and of Lazarus, there was the abyss which separates Volta from Jesus Christ, the man from God. No matter, exclaimed the critics. Give us Molière, Corneille and Racine; we will have none others. True, said MM. Lemercier, Viennet and Baour-Lormian, you have us; but criticism would not accept them.

Now we will pass on to the opposition which came from the side of the associates. Talma had spent his life asking authors to write him something fresh.

Mademoiselle Mars said: "Do so if you like."

Other members said: "Do nothing of the kind."

Talma, born in Paris, but brought up in England, spoke English as easily as French; Talma, acting, with equal indifference *Auguste* and *Néron* in Paris and *Hamlet* and *Richard III.* in London; compelled to play Ducis instead of Shakespeare, could comprehend all that would be gained by the introduction of a fresh element into the national art.

Mademoiselle Mars, intelligent, delicate, a *comedienne* both innately and from study, who made up for want of genius by wit, of strength by gracefulness, greatness by cleverness, she could say, "*Do something fresh if you want to.*" Armed with her qualifications, even though they were slightly inferior, whilst still eminently sym-

pathetic, she was always safe *to succeed* in everything. You can see she was not mistaken, since, after she had played Sylvia, Elmire, Célimène, she took the part of the Duchesse de Guise, Dona Sol and of Desdemona.

The rest said, "*Do not create anything fresh for us*," because, for the most part, they were just ordinary stereotyped artists with no desire to begin their education over again, feeling, at the same time too, that if they attempted it they were powerless to transform themselves.

Let us indeed examine into the education given to our artists, and see if it is as complete and intelligent as it might be.

CHAPTER IV

Talma—Mademoiselle Mars—The Conservatoire—Macready—Young—Kean—Miss Smithson—Mrs. Siddons—Miss Faucit—Shakespeare—The limits to dramatic art in France

WE have told what Talma's education had been. Brought early to Paris, taken to London at the age of eight or nine, his earliest enthusiasm had been for Shakespeare. When he returned to Paris he had made his first appearance about 1788 or '89, and had done his very utmost to get the theatre to embark on true lines. Not succeeding in moving them in the matter of works, he had turned to costumes. After he had played *Charles IX.*, Chenier's classical piece, without being able to change a line of it, he had played Racine's *Bérénice* and changed Titus's style of wig. That change of wig created a revolution. From 1791, the period during which the work was played, they wore their locks *à la Titus*. So Talma demanded something fresh, because he was a genius. Mlle. Mars, a *fille de la balle* in theatrical parlance, who had acted in comedy from her mother's knees, lisping Sedaine's *Victorine* when first learning to talk; a pupil of Monvel, whom they banished from the Comédie-Française with a shameful excuse, but really because, with his unstudied tones, without even raising his voice, he produced more effect than MM. Larive and Lafond with their loud cries and great strength; Mlle. Mars, who could modulate her flexible voice to the whole dramatic gamut, from the charming prattle of Madame de Bawr to the growling and savage roar of Clotilde;

Mademoiselle Mars, who by means of her art could make up for genuine passion; she accepted the new school because she was clever. But as for the rest of them, they rejected it because they were merely mechanical. Firmin and Joanny very nearly came over to our side, yet, after all, the transition was not really sincere. Firmin shrank from Antony, and Joanny certainly preferred Orosmane to Othello. Who was to blame? I do not hesitate to say it was the fault of the dramatic education given by the professors of the Conservatoire to their pupils. It is true they were only appointed professors to the Conservatoire on condition they gave this education and no other. Why is not Frédérick, a powerful genius (in spite of what our collaborator Marteau said the other day in *Le Mousquetaire*), why is not Frédérick a professor at the Conservatoire? Why is not Bocage, who has created on a lofty plane seven or eight rôles which will remain as types? Why is not Lockroy a professor of the Conservatoire, who is the cleverest adviser I know? Why, finally, is not Dorval a professor there, a large-hearted woman, who had enthusiasm enough to inspire half a score of actresses if it could be done?

Because the Conservatoire must not teach anything but dead art and has to be hostile to living art. It appears to me that the Conservatoire is committing the same error as the École de Rome. All *grand prix* students are sent to Rome. Now suppose Rembrandt and Rubens were our contemporaries: Rembrandt who stands for light and Rubens for colour. Suppose God had bestowed the honour on France of making them our countrymen. Suppose, then, they are pupils, the one of Decamps, the other of Delacroix. Suppose they compete, and that Rembrandt painted for his theme *La Ronde de Nuit*, and that Rubens painted *l'Adoration des Mages*. Suppose they were accepted, and, which is absolutely unimaginable, the one gained the first and the other the second prize. Next, they pick out Rubens and Rembrandt, and dis-

patch them to M. Ingres, director of the School of Painting at Rome, and write to him to give a guiding hand to these two promising young men. M. Ingres has the two pictures sent to him to look at. He faints at the sight of *l'Adoration des Mages*, and has a fit when he sees *La Ronde de Nuit*, and he totally abandons the two pupils to their unhappy fate with the advice—Study Raphael, apart from Raphael there is no salvation possible. Do you imagine that Rembrandt and Rubens, if they should study, Rembrandt *Les Fiançailles de la Vierge* and Rubens *La Dispute d'Athénes*, could ever paint such pictures? Not only would they remain bad scholars instead of becoming masters, and very great masters; but, instead of painting *La Descente de Croix* and *l'Ange du Jeune Tobie*, they would do atrocious *pasticcio* far worse than these.

Ah, well! that is exactly what happens to the pupils of the Conservatoire. In France they are destined either for tragedy or comedy: if for tragedy, they study Corneille and Racine—if for comedy, Molière and Regnard. Hardly ever at the same time both Corneille, Molière, Regnard and Racine. It must be either comedy or tragedy—laughter or tears. In England they have no Conservatoire, and no author but Shakespeare. But Shakespeare contains the whole of humanity. A pupil who studies Shakespeare studies at the same time Corneille, Molière, Racine and Regnard. Then, too, Shakespeare is as full of comedy as Molière and Regnard; look at *Falstaff* and *Mercutio*. He is as dramatic as Corneille and Racine; witness *Othello* and *Richard III*. Furthermore, he is as mystical as Goethe, for instance *Hamlet*; as dramatic as Schiller, in *Macbeth*; as poetical . . . as the whole realm of poetry combined. Think of *Romeo*. Accordingly, when an actor or actress has studied Shakespeare, they have studied everything. The actress has studied innocence in Juliet, ambition in Lady Macbeth, grace in Ariel, filial affection in Cordelia, maternal love in Valeria,

terror in Hamlet's mother and devotion and love in Desdemona. The actor has studied artifice in Richard III., madness in King Lear, jealousy in Othello, dignity in Julius Cæsar, chivalry in Talbot and melancholy in Hamlet—melancholy, the tenth muse, unknown to the ancients, which has been revealed to us by the sixteenth century. Shakespeare foresaw everything, even mesmerism, which did not appear till the close of the eighteenth century. Think of the sleep-walking scene of Lady Macbeth! The result is that in the hands of a well-developed student, Shakespeare can replace Molière, Corneille, Racine, Calderon, Goethe and Schiller. This it is which clouds Macready's brow in Hamlet, Kean's terrible glance in Othello, the ominous laughter of Richard in Young, Smithson's heartrending tears in Ophelia, and Siddons' appalling shrieks in Lady Macbeth and Miss Faucit's enchanting love-making in Juliet.

A moment ago we made a suggestion, we said let us suppose Rembrandt and Rubens lived in our days. Now let us also imagine that Shakespeare is our contemporary. Who, at the Théâtre-Français will play Romeo, Juliet, Desdemona, Ariel, Miranda, Richard III., Hamlet and Ophelia? Nobody. Mademoiselle Rachel's inflexible talent will not bend to all the feminine tenderness necessary for the swans of Shakespeare. Beauvallet, Geoffroy and Réginer, perhaps, might give us an idea of some of the masculine types. But the number of persons who could undertake the playing of Shakespeare, at the Théâtre-Français, would certainly not exceed two or three. Shakespeare, therefore, would be compelled to do what Hugo and I did in 1830, or as Casimir Delavigne had to do in 1833 with *Les Enfants d'Édouard*.

Oh, gentlemen! you who are engaged in matters of French dramatic art, ponder this seriously. France, with its powers of assimilation, ought not to restrict itself to National Art. She ought to seize upon European Art,

cosmopolitan, universal art—bounded in the North by Shakespeare, in the East by Æschylus, in the South by Calderon and in the West by Corneille. It was thus that Augustus, Charlemagne and Napoleon conceived their Empires.

And now we ask our patient, faithful reader's permission to close provisionally this series of our Memoirs. The Souvenirs which we should now have to recall belong to the period at which we have arrived and frequently have too many points of contact with present-day politics and politicians to enable us always to speak freely. Later, when better conditions shall prevail in France, in the matter of the press—if the reception accorded to these Memoirs comes up to our expectation, and God sees fit to grant us life—we will resume our chronicler's pen in the hope of providing fresh and curious material for the veracious history of our times.

FINIS

APPENDIX

[See text, p. 83. The following is the discussion referred to.]

NOUS avons promis, on se le rappelle, de compulser les archives du conseil d'État, et de donner un extrait de cinq ou six séances où fut débattue, devant la commission formée pour préparer la loi sur les théâtres, la question de la censure dramatique et de la liberté théâtrale. Sans tenir compte de l'ordre chronologique, nous allons mettre sous les yeux de nos lecteurs ce précieux document de notre histoire littéraire, qui nous semble avoir sa place marquée ici mieux que partout ailleurs.

Or, il arriva qu'un jour,—c'était dans la seconde quinzaine de septembre 1849,—je reçus une lettre qui me priait de me rendre le lendemain à une séance du conseil d'État.

Mon étonnement fut grand ; je n'ai jamais ni donné, ni demandé un conseil.

Quel conseil pouvait donc avoir à me donner ou à me demander le conseil d'État.

Je me rendis à l'invitation un peu tard, selon mon habitude ; aussi la séance était-elle déjà ouverte.

M. Vivien présidait, et MM. les conseillers Béhic et Charton siégeaient à ses côtés.

MM. Bayard, Mélesville, Victor Hugo, Eugène Scribe et Émile Souvestre avaient été convoqués comme moi, et, arrivés avant moi, étaient en séance.

Mélesville parlait sur la question de la liberté industrielle des théâtres. Cette question m'intéressait d'autant plus que c'était la première fois qu'une commission quelconque me fît l'honneur de me convoquer à une pareille délibération.

Mélesville racontait, avec cette parole claire et facile qui, en écartant ses lèvres, fait voir à la fois et son bienveillant sourire et ses belles dents, Mélesville racontait, dis-je, que, l'année précédente, il avait fait partie d'une commission formée par M. Ledru-Rollin

dans le but d'examiner la question théâtrale sous le triple aspect de la liberté industrielle, de la censure et des cautionnements.

La commission s'était prononcée pour la liberté industrielle.

Mélesville avouait qu'il ne s'était point, en cette circonstance, réuni à la majorité, et qu'il était, lui, partisan, non d'une liberté illimitée, mais d'une concurrence limitée.

Tout cela fut dit, je le répète, avec cette gracieuse urbanité de paroles qui est le caractère particulier de la conversation de Mélesville.

Puis vint le tour de Bayard.

Vice-président de la société des auteurs dramatiques, il déclara, au nom de cette société, qu'elle demandait la liberté théâtrale la plus absolue.

Quant à lui personnellement, ainsi que Mélesville, il demandait un moyen terme qui donnât plus d'activité aux théâtres existants : —par exemple, l'Odéon vigoureusement soutenu, pour éperonner le Théâtre-Français, et un troisième théâtre lyrique, pour fouetter l'Opéra-Comique et le Grand-Opéra.

Il était comme ces pisciculteurs qui mettent un certain nombre de perches et de brochets dans leurs étangs afin d'empêcher, en leur donnant la chasse, les carpes de devenir trop grasses.

La discussion se prolongea pendant quelque temps sur la même matière entre MM. les conseillers Béhic et Charton, et MM. Mélesville et Bayard,—MM. les conseillers prétendant qu'il y avait déjà trop de théâtres, MM. les auteurs affirmant qu'un troisième théâtre lyrique était nécessaire.

Puis ce fut le tour de Scribe de parler.

M. Scribe.—La liberté des théâtres serait la ruine de l'art, du goût, de l'industrie et des *mœurs!* Avec elle, il ne s'élèvera pas de bons théâtres ; il s'en élèvera immédiatement beaucoup de mauvais. La raison en est bien simple : les bons théâtres font peu d'argent ; les mauvais, beaucoup. Je ne chercherai pas comment on peut restreindre la liberté des entreprises théâtrales. Mon système est franc : je n'admets pas cette liberté. Si l'absolutisme peut être permis quelque part, c'est assurément en fait de théâtre. Je voudrais que l'on fît ce que firent autrefois les décrets impériaux, qu'on limitât d'une manière précise et assez étroite le nombre des théâtres de la capitale. Je dis assez étroite ; je ne voudrais pas, cependant, que l'on adoptât le nombre fixé en 1807. La population a augmenté depuis cette époque : il faut tenir compte de cette augmentation ; je prendrais, par exemple, le nombre seize ; sur ces

seize théâtres conservés, tant seraient consacrés aux chefs-d'œuvre anciens, tant au genre lyrique, tant à la comédie et à la tragédie moderne, etc., etc. Par ce système, on arriverait à augmenter le nombre des grands théâtres, des théâtres utiles, et, en même temps, à les rendre prospères par la diminution des scènes secondaires qui leur font concurrence. Les grands théâtres, devenant plus riches, pourraient se passer des subventions que leur paye le gouvernement. On ferait ainsi de l'économie et de la morale, en supprimant les théâtres inutiles ou *dangereux* : par exemple, les théâtres d'enfants, enseignement mutuel de *mauvaise littérature* et de *mauvaises mœurs*.

Le privilége, dans ce système franc et sévère, est légitime, *puisqu'il n'est institué qu'en faveur des ouvrages qui peuvent faire honneur à l'art, et être utiles à la morale publique.*

M. ALEXANDRE DUMAS.—Je suis fâché de n'être d'accord, avec mon confrère Scribe, sur aucune des propositions qu'il vient d'émettre, relativement aux théâtres et aux priviléges.

Les théâtres d'enfants, a-t-il dit, sont immoraux, c'est vrai ; mais on peut les soumettre à une police rigoureuse : ils ne le seront plus. Ne les détruisez pas, c'est une pépinière précieuse de comédiens.

M. SCRIBE.—Et le Conservatoire !

M. DUMAS.—Le Conservatoire fait des comédiens impossibles. Qu'on me donne n'importe qui,—un garde municipal licencié en Février, un boutiquier retiré,—j'en ferai un acteur ; mais je n'en ai jamais pu former un seul avec les élèves du Conservatoire. Ils sont à jamais gâtés par la routine et la médiocrité de l'école ; ils n'ont point étudié la nature, ils se sont toujours bornés à copier plus ou moins mal leur maître. Au contraire, dès qu'un enfant est sur le théâtre, ce qu'il peut y avoir en lui de talent se développe naturellement. C'est ainsi que se sont formés presque tous nos grands comédiens modernes.

Quant à la liberté des théâtres, à mon avis, plus vous la laisserez entière, plus vous aurez de bons théâtres,—et, par *bons théâtres*, j'entends, moi, ceux qui attirent le plus de monde, ceux qui font vivre le plus de familles.

Je ne conçois point les priviléges : dès qu'il y a privilége, il y a abus ! Un privilége me donne un droit que n'a pas mon voisin, et me pousse à faire ce que je ne ferais pas si l'égalité existait pour tous. Un privilége fait trouver de l'argent pour une entreprise ruineuse, el mène à la banqueroute. Le jour où il n'y aura plus de priviléges, vous aurez trente théâtres dans Paris ; mais, un an après, il en restera tout au plus dix ou douze, et tous seront en état

de se suffire. Telle personne qui, les priviléges abolis, ne bâtirait jamais un théâtre nouveau, avec un privilége en bâtira un immédiatement. On a donc bien tort de s'effrayer du régime de la liberté !

M. SCRIBE.—Mon confrère, avec la liberté illimitée, nous promet, d'ici à deux ans, une vingtaine de banqueroutes au bout desquelles il restera dix ou douze théâtres ; je demande qu'on établisse tout de suite les dix ou douze théâtres, avant d'avoir laissé se consommer la ruine d'un millier de familles.

Où serait le mal, lorsque tant de petits théâtres *immoraux* disparaîtraient, et que, pour compenser leur disparition, il y aurait trois théâtres français et quatre théâtres lyriques ?

Imposez des conditions au privilége, et vous verrez que vous aurez les avantages de la liberté sans en avoir les inconvénients. On a expérimenté tous les abus du régime du privilége, on peut donc y porter remède. La liberté illimitée, vous ne la connaissez pas,—ou, du moins, vous ne la connaissez pas suffisamment : c'est un abîme.

Je ne saurais admettre cette opinion de M. Dumas, que, d'une manière absolue, les meilleurs théâtres sont ceux qui gagnent le plus d'argent, et qui font vivre le plus de monde ; je dirai, au contraire, que ces théâtres-là sont souvent les mauvais. On ne gagne pas beaucoup d'argent avec les pièces vraiment littéraires ; on réussit souvent mieux à en gagner avec des excentricités, des attaques contre la morale et le gouvernement. Avec la liberté, l'industrialisme conduira de plus en plus loin dans cette voie déplorable.

M. DUMAS.—Les attaques contre le gouvernement, on les réprimera par les lois. M. Scribe exagère, d'ailleurs, quand il dit que ces attaques sont les meilleurs moyens de succès pour un théâtre : le public, la plupart du temps, fait prompte justice des attaques contre la morale ; les attaques contre le gouvernement ne l'entraînent qu'un instant, quand elles l'entraînent.

M. Scribe fait trop bon marché des petits théâtres ; l'immoralité ne leur est pas inhérente, et l'art ne leur est pas toujours étranger : il y a de l'art jusque dans les pantomimes et dans la danse. Ces théâtres, d'ailleurs, font vivre bien des artistes, bien des familles !

M. le président prie M. Souvestre d'exposer son opinion.

M. ÉMILE SOUVESTRE.—Je suis désolé de ne pouvoir adopter complétement aucune des opinions qu'ont émises jusqu'ici mes confrères.

Je ne crois point, comme M. Alexandre Dumas, que l'art et

l'industrie théâtrale soient toujours mêlés, et que là où réussit l'industrie, l'art prospère toujours. Je ne crois pas, comme M. Scribe, qu'il faille mépriser complétement et abandonner l'intérêt de l'industrie là où il n'y a pas d'intérêt d'art.

Un privilége n'a pas de raison d'exister lorsqu'il ne procure pas, soit un profit au gouvernement, soit un bénéfice moral ou intellectuel à la nation. Or, c'est le cas de la plupart des priviléges de théâtre actuellement concédés. Est-ce un monopole qui fasse gagner de l'argent au gouvernement? Non. Ce monopole sert-il à l'avancement moral ou intellectuel? La plupart des théâtres agissent en sens contraire de ce progrès. Je voudrais qu'on fît une distinction entre les théâtres qui sont utiles à la conservation et à l'avancement de l'art, à l'instruction, à la moralisation du peuple, et ceux qui ne sont purement qu'une exploitation industrielle. Ceux-ci, comme toutes les exploitations industrielles, devraient être abandonnés au régime de la liberté, de la libre concurrence. Ceux de la première catégorie seraient, au contraire, dotés, soutenus par le gouvernement; c'est son devoir d'être leur tuteur.

Maintenir le privilége pour les théâtres purement industriels, c'est maintenir une cause de ruine: le privilége est un hameçon avec lequel on attire des écus pour les faire perdre; il n'est point une valeur réelle, il n'en est que le fantôme. A cause de l'espèce de fascination qu'il exerce, il fait fonder des théâtres là où ils ne peuvent réussir; il accumule toutes les charges des exploitations successives, et entretient ainsi une ruine permanente. Ces charges ne seraient point transmises dans une entreprise ordinaire. Si un homme a fait de mauvaises affaires dans une filature, celui qui la lui achète prend l'établissement pour ce qu'il vaut, et ne s'engage pas à payer les dettes de son prédécesseur.

Je crois donc que la loi doit absolument reconnaître le principe de la libre concurrence des théâtres purement industriels. Est-ce à dire pour cela qu'on doive leur donner une liberté sans condition? Je ne le crois point, et je serais des premiers à demander qu'on fixât certaines conditions de police et de capital.

J'arrive aux théâtres qu'on peut regarder comme des écoles, des musées, et qui seraient privilégiés en ce sens qu'ils seraient subventionnés par l'État. Quels seraient ces théâtres? Ici, la difficulté est sérieuse; cependant, je l'aborde.

Il y a un théâtre qui, incontestablement, a droit d'être rangé dans cette catégorie: c'est celui qui est représenté actuellement par le Théâtre-Français. Ce théâtre serait chargé de conserver les

chefs-d'œuvre littéraires du passé. Maintenant, à côté de ce théâtre stationnaire, il faut un théâtre qui marche, qui innove : ce sera le Second-Théâtre-Français ; il faudra le créer dans des conditions sérieuses de rivalité ; on devra conserver, pour le genre lyrique, les deux théâtres qui existent maintenant, l'Opéra et l'Opéra-Comique. Mais ils ne suffisent pas, on le disait tout à l'heure à la commission. Le gouvernement crée, chaque année, des compositeurs auxquels il ne donne ni ne laisse les moyens de faire jouer leurs œuvres. Il faut un troisième théâtre lyrique. Ce ne doit pas être simplement une doublure des deux autres. Il y a une chose qui me paraît trop oubliée dans toute cette question, c'est le peuple. Vous subventionnez des théâtres pour l'art pur, et le peuple, dont l'éducation musicale n'est pas suffisante pour qu'il comprenne nos grands opéras, vous l'abandonnez à lui-même, vous ne faites rien pour lui. Je voudrais que le peuple eût son Théâtre-Français et son Grand-Opéra réunis dans la même salle, c'est-à-dire qu'il eût un théâtre où l'on ne jouerait que les œuvres, soit lyriques, soit purement dramatiques, hors de discussion au point de vue de l'art et de la morale.

Si l'on ne crée pas ce théâtre,—soit sous le régime de la liberté, soit avec le régime du privilége,— on arrivera à une démoralisation successive, à une décadence intellectuelle des masses par le théâtre. En effet, il est bien plus facile d'attirer la foule avec les mauvaises passions qu'avec les bons exemples ; de sorte que vous verrez toujours les théâtres dangereux, c'est-à-dire ceux qui ont une direction subversive de l'ordre véritable, l'emporter sur les bons, c'est-à-dire sur les théâtres utiles, sur les théâtres où l'on se respecte, et où l'on respecte l'art. Ce résultat se produira sous le régime du privilége aussi facilement que sous celui de la liberté ; car le gouvernement n'a pas plus d'action sur la direction intellectuelle des théâtres privilégiés qu'il n'en aurait sur celle des théâtres libres. Voyez ce qui se passe au Vaudeville. Une administration gratifiée d'un privilége de la République attaque impunément la République chaque soir. Vous connaissez, messieurs, ces pièces qu'on a osé décorer du nom d'*aristophanesques*. Comme c'est la première fois qu'on promène sur notre scène les images vivantes des hommes publics, que sur notre scène l'on bafoue grossièrement les plus hautes personnifications du pouvoir national, et les institutions qui régissent la France, le public vient en foule. Est-ce là un moyen honnête de faire prospérer un théâtre ?

Quand Aristophane faisait des comédies, il était le représentant

de la liberté de la pensée, et non de l'industrie. Son théâtre, c'était, à Athènes, la liberté de la presse ; ce n'était point une exploitation ; ses attaques acerbes, c'était l'acte d'un citoyen, et non le talent d'un manufacturier. C'est donc en vain que l'on s'abrite derrière un grand nom pour cacher les tristes spéculations du privilége aux abois.

Il y a utilité pour l'honneur de la France à ce que le gouvernement ne laisse point complétement l'art dramatique à l'industrie, et le moyen le plus puissant de l'arracher à son matérialisme, c'est d'apporter un soin tout particulier à l'organisation des théâtres d'art, et principalement des théâtres populaires. Il faudrait surtout composer avec un grand soin les comités chargés de juger les pièces ; jusqu'à présent, ils l'ont été, en général, dans les grands théâtres avec assez de négligence. On a pris d'ordinaire des personnes appartenant à l'administration théâtrale, des académiciens représentant le passé plutôt que le présent, enfin des comédiens. Les académiciens se retirent promptement ; le comité se dépeuple ; bientôt il ne reste plus du tribunal primitif que les juges qui n'ont rien de mieux à faire, et ce ne sont pas les meilleurs.

De pareils comités ne conviennent pas au but que doivent atteindre les théâtres subventionnés : il en faut de plus sérieux. Les comités ne seront sérieux qu'autant qu'il y aura une pénalité pour ceux de leurs membres qui manqueraient aux séances. Je voudrais que leurs membres fussent non-seulement des administrateurs de théâtre, des auteurs, des comédiens, mais aussi des artistes, des gens du monde. Des sensations de ce public varié, quoique restreint, il résulterait un jugement qui serait probablement le précurseur certain du jugement du public véritable. Pour me résumer, voici ce que je souhaiterais :

Liberté de l'industrie théâtrale ; création de théâtres d'art, littéraires et lyriques, subventionnés par le gouvernement, et soumis à une constitution nouvelle ;

Création d'un théâtre populaire, également subventionné, et destiné à faire cultiver la morale, le patriotisme et l'art parmi les travailleurs.

M. SCRIBE.—J'admets la plupart des idées de M. Souvestre ; elles me semblent généreuses et de nature à ce que leur application soit utile pour les populations et pour l'art : j'entends parler surtout de celles qui sont relatives à la constitution des théâtres subventionnés. Je dois ajouter que l'application de ses idées me paraît difficile avec le système de la liberté, très-facile avec le système du privilége.

M. Souvestre.—J'ai dit les motifs qui m'ont fait combattre le système du privilége. Fût-il plus facile d'appliquer à ce système ma proposition sur les théâtres subventionnés, je le repousserais ; mais je ne vois aucune difficulté à concilier ma proposition avec le système de la liberté industrielle. Je veux que le gouvernement décide ce qu'il faut organiser de théâtres subventionnés, mais non ce qu'il faut organiser de théâtres en général ; je ne veux pas qu'il intervienne dans ce qui relève seulement de la spéculation, qu'il impose à l'industrie théâtrale son jugement, qu'il décide qu'il ne peut y avoir que tant de scènes jouant tels genres, ouvertes dans tels quartiers. Laissez l'intérêt mercantile décider ces questions de spéculation, vous qui gouvernez ; vous n'avez à vous occuper que de deux choses : l'art et le peuple.

Dans l'état actuel, le pouvoir préjuge quels sont les théâtres qui peuvent vivre, et le résultat prouve combien de fois il s'est trompé ; laissez l'expérience porter ce jugement. Avec la liberté, les théâtres qui n'ont pas de raison d'être tomberont ; ceux qui ont une aptitude réelle à vivre resteront seuls debout.

Les Lacédémoniens jetaient dans un gouffre les enfants qui ne leur paraissaient pas viables ; ils risquaient d'y jeter Léonidas. Ne faites pas comme eux ; mais, comme les Athéniens, laissez tout le monde essayer l'existence :—le temps décidera qui doit vivre qui doit mourir.

Cette merveilleuse improvisation parut produire le plus grand effet sur le conseil d'État ; par malheur, le résultat prouva que l'émotion avait été aussi passagère que profonde !

C'était au tour d'Hugo de parler. Il se leva.

M. Victor Hugo.—Mon opinion sur la matière qui se discute maintenant devant la commission est anciennement connue ; je l'ai même en partie publiée. J'y persiste plus que jamais. Le temps où elle prévaudra n'est pas encore venu. Cependant, comme, dans ma conviction profonde, le principe de la liberté doit finir par triompher sur tous les points, j'attache de l'importance à la manière sérieuse dont la commission du conseil d'État étudie les questions qui lui sont soumises ; ce travail préparatoire est utile, et je m'y associe volontiers. Je ne laisserai échapper, pour ma part, aucune occasion de semer des germes de liberté. Faisons notre devoir, qui est de semer les idées ; le temps fera le sien, qui est de les féconder.

Je commencerai par dire à la commission que, dans la question des théâtres, question très-grande et très-sérieuse, il n'y a que deux intérêts qui me préoccupent ; à la vérité, ils embrassent

tout : l'un est le progrès de l'art, l'autre est l'amélioration du peuple.

J'ai dans le cœur une certaine indifférence pour les formes politiques, et une inexprimable passion pour la liberté. Je viens de vous le dire, la liberté est mon principe, et partout où elle m'apparaît, je plaide ou je lutte pour elle.

Cependant, si, dans la question théâtrale, vous trouvez un moyen qui ne soit pas la liberté, mais qui me donne le progrès de l'art et l'amélioration du peuple, j'irai jusqu'à vous sacrifier le grand principe pour lequel j'ai toujours combattu, je m'inclinerai et je me tairai. Maintenant, pouvez-vous arriver à ces résultats autrement que par la liberté ?

Vous touchez, dans la matière spéciale qui vous occupe, à la grande, à l'éternelle question qui reparaît sans cesse, et sous toutes les formes, dans la vie de l'humanité. Les deux grands principes qui la dominent dans leur lutte perpétuelle, la liberté, l'autorité, sont en présence dans cette question-ci comme dans toutes les autres. Entre ces deux principes, il vous faudra choisir, sauf ensuite à faire d'utiles accommodements entre celui que vous choisirez et celui que vous ne choisirez pas. Il vous faudra choisir ; lequel prendrez-vous ? Examinons.

Dans la question des théâtres, le principe de l'autorité a ceci pour lui et contre lui, qu'il a déjà été expérimenté. Depuis que le théâtre existe en France, le principe d'autorité le possède. Si l'on a constaté ses inconvénients, on a aussi constaté ses avantages, on les connaît. Le principe de liberté n'a pas encore été mis à l'épreuve.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—Il a été mis à l'épreuve de 1791 à 1806.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Il fut proclamé en 1791, mais non réalisé ; on était en présence de la guillotine : la liberté germait alors, elle ne régnait pas. Il ne faut point juger des effets de la liberté des théâtres par ce qu'elle a pu produire pendant la première révolution.

Le principe de l'autorité a pu, lui, au contraire, produire tous ses fruits ; il a eu sa réalisation la plus complète dans un système où pas un détail n'a été omis. Dans ce système, aucun spectacle ne pouvait s'ouvrir sans autorisation. On avait été jusqu'à spécifier le nombre de personnages qui pouvaient paraître en scène dans chaque théâtre, jusqu'à interdire aux uns de chanter, aux autres de parler ; jusqu'à régler, en de certains cas, le costume et même le geste ; jusqu'à introduire dans les fantaisies de la scène je ne sais quelle rigueur hiératique.

Le principe de l'autorité, réalisé si complétement, qu'a-t-il produit? On va me parler de Louis XIV et de son grand règne. Louis XIV a porté le principe de l'autorité, sous toutes ses formes, à son plus haut degré de splendeur. Je n'ai à parler ici que du théâtre. Eh bien! le théâtre du XVII^e^ siècle eût été plus grand sans la pression du principe d'autorité. Ce principe a arrêté l'essor de Corneille, et froissé son robuste génie. Molière s'y est souvent soustrait, parce qu'il vivait dans la familiarité du grand roi, dont il avait les sympathies personnelles. Molière n'a été si favorisé que parce qu'il était valet de chambre tapissier de Louis XIV; il n'eût point fait sans cela le quart de ses chefs-d'œuvre. Le sourire du maître lui permettait l'audace. Chose bizarre à dire! c'est sa domesticité qui a fait son indépendance: si Molière n'eût pas été libre!

Vous savez qu'un des miracles de l'esprit humain avait été déclaré immoral par les contemporains; il fallut un ordre formel de Louis XIV pour qu'on jouât *Tartufe*. Voilà ce qu'a fait le principe de l'autorité dans son plus beau siècle. Je passerai sur Louis XV et sur son temps; c'est une époque de complète dégradation pour l'art dramatique. Je range les tragédies de Voltaire parmi les œuvres les plus informes que l'esprit humain ait jamais produites. Si Voltaire n'était pas, à côté de cela, un des plus beaux génies de l'humanité; s'il n'avait pas produit, entre autres grands résultats, ce résultat admirable de l'adoucissement des mœurs, il serait au niveau de Campistron.

Je ne triomphe donc pas du XVIII^e^ siècle; je le pourrais, mais je m'abstiens. Remarquez seulement que le chef-d'œuvre dramatique qui marque la fin de ce siècle, le *Mariage de Figaro*, est dû à la rupture du principe d'autorité. J'arrive à l'empire: alors l'autorité avait été restaurée dans toute sa splendeur; elle avait quelque chose de plus éclatant encore que l'autorité de Louis XIV; il y avait alors un maître qui ne se contentait pas d'être le plus grand capitaine, le plus grand législateur, le plus grand politique, le plus grand prince de son temps, mais qui voulait être le plus grand organisateur de toutes choses. La littérature, l'art, la pensée, ne pouvaient échapper à sa domination, pas plus que tout le reste. Il a eu, et je l'en loue, la volonté d'organiser l'art; pour cela, il n'a rien épargné, il a tout prodigué. De Moscou, il organisait le Théâtre-Français. Dans le moment même où la fortune tournait, et où il pouvait voir l'abîme s'ouvrir, il s'occupait de réglementer les soubrettes et les crispins.

Eh bien, malgré tant de soins et tant de volonté, cet homme, qui

pouvait gagner la bataille de Marengo et la bataille d'Austerlitz, n'a pu faire faire un chef-d'œuvre. Il aurait donné des millions pour que ce chef-d'œuvre naquît ; il aurait fait prince celui qui en aurait honoré son règne. Un jour, il passait une revue. Il y avait là dans les rangs un auteur assez médiocre qui s'appelait Barjaud. Personne ne connaît plus ce nom. On dit à l'empereur : " Sire, M. Barjaud est là.—M. Barjaud, dit-il aussitôt, sortez des rangs ! " Et il lui demanda ce qu'il pouvait faire pour lui.

M. SCRIBE.—M. Barjaud demanda une sous-lieutenance ; ce qui ne prouve pas qu'il eût la vocation des lettres. Il fut tué peu de temps après ; ce qui aurait empêché son talent—s'il avait eu du talent—d'illustrer le règne impérial.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Vous abondez dans mon sens. D'après ce que l'empereur faisait pour des médiocrités, jugez de ce qu'il eût fait pour des talents ; jugez de ce qu'il eût fait pour des génies ! Une de ses passions eût été de faire naître une grande littérature. Son goût littéraire était supérieur : le *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* le prouve. Quand l'empereur prend un livre, il ouvre Corneille. Eh bien ! cette littérature qu'il souhaitait si ardemment pour en couronner son règne, lui, ce grand créateur, il n'a pu la créer. Qu'ont produit, dans le domaine de l'art, tant d'efforts, tant de persévérance, tant de magnificence, tant de volonté ? Qu'a produit ce principe de l'autorité, si puissamment appliqué par l'homme qui le faisait en quelque sorte vivant ? Rien !

M. SCRIBE.—Vous oubliez les *Templiers* de M. Raynouard.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Je ne les oublie pas. Il y a dans cette pièce un beau vers.

Voilà, au point de vue de l'art sous l'empire, ce que l'autorité a produit, c'est-à-dire rien de grand, rien de beau.

J'en suis venu à me dire, pour ma part, en voyant ces résultats, que l'autorité pourrait bien ne pas être le meilleur moyen de faire fructifier l'art ; qu'il fallait peut-être songer à quelque autre chose : nous verrons tout à l'heure à quoi.

Le point de vue de l'art épuisé, passons à l'autre, au point de vue de la moralisation et de l'instruction du peuple. C'est un côté de la question qui me touche infiniment.

Qu'a fait le principe d'autorité à ce point de vue ? et que veut-il ? —Je me borne toujours au théâtre.—Le principe d'autorité voulait et devait vouloir que le théâtre contribuât, pour sa part, à enseigner au peuple tous les respects, les devoirs moraux, la religion, le principe monarchique qui dominait alors, et dont je suis loin de méconnaître la puissance civilisatrice. Eh bien ! je prends le théâtre tel

qu'il a été au siècle par excellence de l'autorité, je le prends dans sa personnification française la plus illustre, dans l'homme que tous les siècles et tous les temps nous envieront, dans Molière. J'observe : que vois-je ? Je vois le théâtre échapper complétement à la direction que lui donne l'autorité ; Molière prêche, d'un bout à l'autre de ses œuvres, la lutte du valet contre le maître, du fils contre le père, de la femme contre le mari, du jeune homme contre le vieillard, de la liberté contre l'autorité.

Nous disons, nous : "Dans *Tartufe*, Molière n'a attaqué que l'hypocrisie." Tous ses contemporains le comprirent autrement.

Le but de l'autorité était-il atteint ? Jugez vous-même. Il était complétement tourné ; elle avait été radicalement impuissante. J'en conclus qu'elle n'a pas en elle la force nécessaire pour donner au peuple, au moins par l'intermédiaire du théâtre, l'enseignement le meilleur selon elle.

Voyez en effet : l'autorité veut que le théâtre enseigne tous les respects ; le théâtre enseigne toutes les désobéissances. Sous la pression des idées religieuses, et même dévotes, toute la comédie qui sort de Molière est sceptique ; sous la pression des idées monarchiques, toute la tragédie qui sort de Corneille est républicaine. Tous deux, Corneille et Molière, sont déclarés, de leur vivant, immoraux, l'un par l'Académie, l'autre par le parlement.

Et voyez comme le jour se fait, voyez comme la lumière vient ! Corneille et Molière, qui ont fait le contraire de ce que voulait leur imposer le principe d'autorité sous la double pression religieuse et monarchique, sont-ils immoraux vraiment ? L'Académie dit oui, le parlement dit oui,—la postérité dit non. Ces deux grands poëtes ont été deux grands philosophes ; ils n'ont pas produit au théâtre la vulgaire morale de l'autorité, mais la haute morale de l'humanité. C'est cette morale, cette morale supérieure et splendide, qui est faite pour l'avenir, et que la courte vue des contemporains qualifie toujours d'immoralité.

Aucun génie n'échappe à cette loi, aucun sage, aucun juste ! L'accusation d'immoralité a successivement atteint et quelquefois martyrisé tous les fondateurs de la sagesse humaine, tous les révélateurs de la sagesse divine. C'est au nom de la morale qu'on a fait boire la ciguë à Socrate, et qu'on a cloué Jésus au gibet. . . .

Maintenant, voulez-vous que je descende de cette région élevée, où je voudrais que les esprits se maintinssent toujours, pour traiter, au point de vue purement industriel, la question que vous étudiez ? Ce point de vue est pour moi peu considérable, et je déclare que le nombre des faillites n'est rien pour moi, à côté d'un chef-d'œuvre

créé ou d'un progrès intellectuel ou moral du peuple obtenu. Cependant, je ne veux point négliger complétement ce côté de la question, et je demanderai si le principe de l'autorité a été, du moins, bon pour faire prospérer les entreprises dramatiques? Non. Il n'a pas même obtenu ce mince résultat. Je n'en veux pour preuve que les dix-huit années du dernier règne. Pendant ces dix-huit années, l'autorité a tenu dans ses mains les théâtres par le privilége et par la distinction des genres. Quel a été le résultat?

L'empereur avait jugé qu'il y avait beaucoup trop de théâtres dans Paris; qu'il y en avait plus que la population de la ville n'en pouvait porter. Par un acte d'autorité despotique, il supprima une partie de ces théâtres, il émonda en bas, et conserva en haut. Voilà ce que fit un homme de génie. La dernière administration des beaux-arts a retranché en haut, et multiplé en bas. Cela seul suffit pour faire juger qu'au grand esprit de gouvernement avait succédé le petit esprit. Qu'avez-vous vu pendant les dix-huit années de la déplorable administration qui s'est continuée, en dépit des chocs de la politique, sous tous les ministres de l'intérieur? Vous avez vu périr successivement ou s'amoindrir toutes les scènes vraiment littéraires.

Chaque fois qu'un théâtre montrait quelques velléités de littérature, l'administration faisait des efforts inouïs pour le faire rentrer dans des genres misérables. Je caractérise cette administration d'un mot: point de débouchés à la pensée élevée; multiplication des spectacles grossiers! les issues fermées en haut, ouvertes en bas? Il suffisait de demander à exploiter un spectacle-concert, un spectacle de marionnettes, de danseurs de corde, pour obtenir la permission d'attirer et de dépraver le public. Les gens de lettres, au nom de l'art et de la littérature, avaient demandé un Second-Théâtre-Français: on leur a répondu par une dérision; on leur a donné l'Odéon!

Voilà comment l'administration comprenait son devoir; voilà comment le principe de l'autorité a fonctionné depuis vingt ans: d'une part, il a comprimé l'essor de la pensée; de l'autre, il a développé l'essor, soit des parties infimes de l'intelligence, soit des intérêts purement matériels. Il a fondé la situation actuelle, dans laquelle nous avons vu un nombre de théâtres hors de toute proportion avec la population parisienne, et créés par des fantaisies sans motifs. Je n'épuise pas les griefs. On a dit beaucoup de choses sur la manière dont on trafiquait des priviléges. J'ai peu de goût à ce genre de recherches. Ce que je constate, c'est qu'on

a développé outre mesure l'industrie misérable pour refouler le développement de l'art.

Maintenant qu'une révolution est survenue, qu'arrive-t-il ? C'est que, du moment qu'elle a éclaté, tous ces théâtres factices sortis du caprice d'un commis, de pis encore quelquefois, sont tombés sur les bras du gouvernement. Il faut, ou les laisser mourir, ce qui est une calamité pour une multitude de malheureux qu'ils nourrissent, ou les entretenir à grands frais, ce qui est une calamité pour le budget. Voilà les fruits des systèmes fondés sur le principe de l'autorité. Ces résultats, je les ai énumérés longuement. Ils ne me satisfont point. Je sens la nécessité d'en venir à un système fondé sur autre chose que ce principe.

Or, ici, il n'y a pas deux solutions. Du moment où vous renoncez au principe d'autorité, vous êtes contraints de vous tourner vers le principe de liberté.

Examinons, maintenant, la question des théâtres au point de vue de la liberté. Je veux pour le théâtre deux libertés qui sont toutes deux dans l'air de ce siècle : liberté d'industrie, liberté de pensée.

Liberté d'industrie, c'est-à-dire point de priviléges ; liberté de pensée, c'est-à-dire point de censure.

Commençons par la liberté d'industrie. Voyons comment nous pourrions organiser le système de la liberté. Ici, je dois supposer un peu ; rien n'existe.

Je suis obligé de revenir à mon point de départ ; car, il ne faut pas le perdre de vue un seul instant, la grande pensée de ce siècle, celle qui doit survivre à toutes les autres, à toutes les formes politiques, quelles qu'elles soient, celle qui sera le fondement de toutes les institutions de l'avenir, c'est la liberté. Je suppose donc que la liberté pénètre dans l'industrie théâtrale comme elle a pénétré dans toutes les autres industries ; puis je me demande si elle satisfera au progrès de l'art, si elle produira la rénovation du peuple. Voici d'abord comment je comprendrais que la liberté de l'industrie théâtrale fût proclamée.

Dans la situation où sont encore les esprits et les questions politiques, aucune liberté ne peut exister sans que le gouvernement y ait pris sa part de surveillance et d'influence. La liberté d'enseignement ne peut, à mon sens, exister qu'à cette condition ; il en est de même de la liberté théâtrale. L'État doit d'autant mieux intervenir dans ces deux questions, qu'il n'y a pas là seulement un intérêt matériel, mais un intérêt moral de la plus haute importance.

Quiconque voudra ouvrir un théâtre le pourra en se soumettant aux conditions de police que voici . . . aux conditions de cautionne-

ment que voici . . . aux garanties de diverses natures que voici. . . . Ce sera le cahier des charges de la liberté.

Ces mesures ne suffisent pas. Je rapprochais tout à l'heure la liberté des théâtres de la liberté de l'enseignement ; c'est que le théâtre est une des branches de l'enseignment populaire. Responsable de la moralité et de l'instruction du peuple, l'État ne doit point se résigner à un rôle négatif, et, après avoir pris quelques précautions, regarder, laisser aller. L'État doit installer, à côté des théâtres libres, des théâtres qu'il gouvernera, et où la pensée sociale se fera jour.

Je voudrais qu'il y eût un théâtre digne de la France, pour les célèbres poëtes morts qui l'ont honorée ; puis un théâtre pour les auteurs vivants. Il faudrait encore un théâtre pour le grand opéra, un autre pour l'opéra-comique. Je subventionnerais magnifiquement ces quatre théâtres.

Les théâtres livrés à l'industrie personnelle sont toujours forcés à une certaine parcimonie. Une pièce coûte cent mille francs à monter : ils reculeront ; vous, vous ne reculerez pas. Un grand acteur met à haut prix ses prétentions : un théâtre libre pourrait marchander et le laisser échapper ; vous, vous ne marchanderez pas. Un écrivain de talent travaille pour un théâtre libre, il reçoit tel droit d'auteur : vous lui donnerez le double ; il travaillera pour vous. Vous aurez ainsi dans les théâtres de l'État, dans les théâtres nationaux, les meilleures pièces, les meilleurs comédiens, les plus beaux spectacles. En même temps, vous, l'État, qui ne spéculez pas, et qui, à la rigueur, en présence d'un grand but de gloire et d'utilité à atteindre, n'êtes pas forcé de gagner de l'argent, vous offrirez au peuple ces magnifiques spectacles au meilleur marché possible.

Je voudrais que l'homme du peuple, pour dix sous, fût aussi bien assis au parterre, dans une stalle de velours, que l'homme du monde à l'orchestre, pour dix francs. De même que je voudrais le théâtre grand pour l'idée, je voudrais la salle vaste pour la foule. De cette façon, vous auriez, dans Paris, quatre magnifiques lieux de rendez-vous où le riche et le pauvre, l'heureux et le malheureux, le Parisien et le provincial, le Français et l'étranger, se rencontreraient tous les soirs, mêleraient fraternellement leur âme, et communieraient, pour ainsi dire, dans la contemplation des grandes œuvres de l'esprit humain. Que sortirait-il de là ? L'amélioration populaire et la moralisation universelle.

Voilà ce que feraient les théâtres nationaux. Maintenant, que feraient les théâtres libres ? Vous allez me dire qu'ils seraient écrasés par une telle concurrence. Messieurs, je respecte la

liberté ; mais je gouverne et je tiens le niveau élevé. C'est à la liberté de s'en arranger.

Les dépenses des théâtres nationaux vous effrayent peut-être : c'est à tort ; fussent-elles énormes, j'en réponds, bien que mon but ne soit pas de créer une spéculation en faveur de l'État, le résultat financier ne lui sera pas désavantageux. Les hommes spéciaux vous diraient que l'État fera avec ces établissements de bonnes affaires. Il arrivera alors ce résultat singulier et heureux qu'avec un chef-d'œuvre, un poëte pourra gagner presque autant d'argent qu'un agent de change par un coup de bourse.

Surtout, ne l'oubliez pas, aux hommes de talent et de génie qui viendront à moi, je dirai : " Je n'ai pas seulement pour but de faire votre fortune, et d'encourager l'art en vous protégeant ; j'ai un but plus élevé encore. Je veux que vous fassiez des chefs-d'œuvre, s'il est possible, mais je veux surtout que vous amélioriez le peuple de toutes les classes. Versez dans la population des idées saines ; faites que vos ouvrages ne sortent pas d'une certaine ligne que voici, et qui me paraît la meilleure." C'est là un langage que tout le monde comprendra ; tout esprit consciencieux, toute âme honnête sentira l'importance de la mission. Vous aurez un théâtre qui attirera la foule, et qui répandra les idées civilisatrices, l'héroïsme, le dévouement, l'abnégation, le devoir, l'amour du pays, par la reproduction vraie, animée ou même patriotiquement exaltée des grands faits de notre histoire.

Et savez-vous ce qui arrivera ! Vous n'attirerez pas seulement le peuple à vos théâtres, vous y attirerez aussi l'étranger. Pas un homme riche en Europe que ne soit tenu de venir à vos théâtres compléter son éducation française et littéraire. Ce sera là une source de richesse pour la France et pour Paris. Vos magnifiques subventions, savez-vous qui les payera ? L'Europe. L'argent de l'étranger affluera chez vous ; vous ferez à la gloire nationale une avance que l'admiration européenne vous remboursera.

Messieurs, au moment où nous sommes, il n'y a qu'une seule nation qui soit en état de donner des produits littéraires au monde entier, et, cette nation, c'est la nation française. Vous avez donc là un monopole immense, un monopole que l'univers civilisé subit depuis dix-huit ans. Les ministres qui nous ont gouvernés n'ont eu qu'une seule pensée : comprimer la littérature française à l'intérieur, la sacrifier au dehors, la laisser systématiquement spolier dans un royaume voisin par la contrefaçon. Je favoriserais, au contraire, cet admirable monopole sous toutes ses formes, et je le répandrais sur le monde entier ; je créerais à Paris des foyers

lumineux qui éclaireraient toutes les nations, et vers lesquels toutes les nations se tourneraient.

Ce n'est pas tout. Pour achever l'œuvre, je voudrais des théâtres spéciaux pour le peuple ; ces théâtres, je les mettrais à la charge, non de l'État, mais de la ville de Paris ; ce seraient des théâtres créés à ses frais, et bien choisis par son administration municipale parmi les théâtres déjà existants, et dés lors subventionnés par elle. Je les appellerais théâtres municipaux.

La ville de Paris est intéressée, sous tous les rapports, à l'existence de ces théâtres : ils développeraient les sentiments moraux et l'instruction dans les classes inférieures : ils contribueraient à faire régner le calme dans cette partie de la population d'où sortent parfois des commotions si fatales à la ville.

Je l'ai dit plus haut d'une manière générale en me faisant le plagiaire de l'empereur Napoléon, je le répète ici en appliquant surtout mon assertion aux classes inférieures de la population parisienne : la peuple français, la population parisienne principalement, ont beaucoup du peuple athénien ; il faut quelque chose pour occuper leur imagination. Les théâtres municipaux seront des espèces de dérivatifs qui neutraliseront les bouillonnements populaires. Avec eux, le peuple parisien lira moins de mauvais pamphlets, boira moins de mauvais vins, hantera moins de mauvais lieux, fera moins de révolutions violentes.

L'intérêt de la ville est patent ; il est naturel qu'elle fasse les frais de ces fondations. Elle ferait appel à des auteurs sages et distingués, qui produiraient sur la scène des pièces élémentaires, tirées surtout de notre histoire nationale. Vous avez vu une partie de cette pensée réalisée par le Cirque ; on a eu tort de le laisser fermer.

Les théâtres municipaux seraient répartis entre les différents quartiers de la capitale, et placés surtout dans les quartiers les moins riches, dans les faubourgs.

Ainsi, à la charge de l'État, quatre théâtres nationaux pour la France et pour l'Europe ; à la charge de la ville, quatre théâtres municipaux pour le peuple des faubourgs ; à côté de ce haut enseignement de l'État, les théâtres libres ; voilà mon système.

Selon moi, de ce système, qui est la liberté, sortiraient la grandeur de l'art, et l'amélioration du peuple, qui sont mes deux buts. Vous avez vu ce qu'avait produit, pour ces deux grands buts, le système basé sur l'autorité, c'est-à-dire le privilége et la censure. Comparez et choisissez.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—Vous admettez le régime de la liberté, mais

vous faites aux théâtres libres une condition bien difficile. Ils seront écrasés par ceux de l'État.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Le rôle des théâtres libres est loin d'être nul à côté des théâtres de l'État. Ces théâtres lutteront avec les vôtres. Quoique vous soyez le gouvernement, vous vous trompez quelquefois. Il vous arrive de repousser des œuvres remarquables ; les théâtres libres accueilleront ces œuvres-là ; ils profiteront des erreurs que vous aurez commises, et les applaudissements du public que vous entendrez dans les salles seront pour vous des reproches, et vous stimuleront.

On va me dire : " Les théâtres libres, qui auront peine à faire concurrence au gouvernement, chercheront, pour réussir, les moyens les plus fâcheux : ils feront appel au dévergondage de l'imagination, ou aux passions populaires ; pour attirer le public, ils spéculeront sur le scandale ; ils feront de l'immoralité, et ils feront de la politique ; ils joueront des pièces extravagantes, excentriques, obscènes, et des comédies aristophanesques." S'il y a dans tout cela quelque chose de criminel, on pourra le réprimer par les moyens légaux ; sinon, ne vous en inquiétez pas. Je suis un de ceux qui ont eu l'inconvénient ou l'honneur, depuis Février, d'être quelquefois mis sur le théâtre. Que m'importe ! j'aime mieux ces plaisanteries, inoffensives après tout, que telles calomnies répandues contre moi par un journal dans ses cinquante mille exemplaires.

Quand on me met sur la scène, j'ai tout le monde pour moi ; quand on me travestit dans un journal, j'ai contre mois les trois quarts des lecteurs ; et, cependant, je ne m'inquiète pas de la liberté de la presse ; je ne fais point de procès aux journaux qui me travestissent ; je ne leur écris pas même de lettres avec un huissier pour facteur. Sachez donc accepter et comprendre la liberté de la pensée sous toutes ses formes, la liberté du théâtre comme la liberté de la presse : c'est l'air même que vous respirez. Contentez-vous, quand les théâtres libres ne dépassent point certaines bornes que la loi peut préciser, de leur faire une noble et puissante guerre avec vos théâtres nationaux et municipaux ; la victoire vous restera.

M. SCRIBE.—Les généreuses idées qui vient d'émettre M. Victor Hugo sont en partie les miennes ; mais il me semble qu'elles gagneraient à être réalisées dans un système moins compliqué Le système de M. Victor Hugo est double, et ses deux parties semblent se contredire. Dans ce système, où la moitié des théâtres serait privilégiée, et l'autre moitié libre, il y aurait deux choses à craindre : ou bien les théâtres du gouvernement et de la

ville ne donneraient que de pièces officielles où personne n'irait, ou bien ils pourraient à leur gré user de ressources immenses de leurs subventions ; dans ce cas, les théâtres libres seraient évidemment écrasés.

Pourquoi, alors, permettre à ceux-ci de soutenir une lutte inégale, qui doit fatalement se terminer par leur ruine ? Si le principe de liberté n'est pas bon en haut, pourquoi serait-il bon en bas ? Je voudrais, et sans invoquer d'autres motifs que ceux que vient de me fournir M. Hugo, que tous les théâtres fussent placés entre les mains du gouvernement.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Je ne prétends nullement établir des théâtres privilégiés ; dans ma pensée, le privilége disparaît. Le privilége ne crée que des théâtres factices ; la liberté vaudra mieux : elle fonctionnera pour l'industrie théâtrale comme pour toutes les autres ; la demande réglera la production. La liberté est la base de tout mon système, il est franc et complet ; mais je veux la liberté pour tout le monde, aussi bien pour l'État que pour les particuliers. Dans mon système, l'État a tous les droits de l'individu ; il peut fonder un théâtre, comme il peut créer un journal ; seulement, il a plus de devoirs encore. J'ai indiqué comment l'État, pour remplir ses devoirs, devait user de la liberté commune ; voilà tout.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—Voulez-vous me permettre de vous questionner sur un détail ? Admettriez-vous, dans votre système, le principe du cautionnement ?

M. VICTOR HUGO.—J'en ai déjà dit un mot tout à l'heure ; je l'admettrais, et voici pourquoi : je ne veux compromettre les intérêts de personne, principalement des pauvres et des faibles, et les comédiens, en général, sont faibles et pauvres. Avec le système de la liberté industrielle, il se présentera plus d'un aventurier qui dira : "Je vais louer un local, engager des acteurs ; si je réussis, je payerai ; si je ne réussis pas, je ne payerai personne." Or, c'est ce que je ne veux point. Le cautionnement répondra. Il aura un autre usage : le payement des amendes qui pourront être infligées aux directeurs. A mon avis, la liberté implique la responsabilité ; c'est pourquoi je veux le cautionnement.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—On a proposé devant la commission d'établir, dans l'hypothèse où la liberté industrielle serait proclamée, des conditions qui empêcheraient d'établir, sous le nom de théâtres, de véritables échoppes : conditions de construction, conditions de dimension, etc.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Ces conditions sont de celles que je mettrais à l'établissement des théâtres.

M. SCRIBE.—Elles me paraissent parfaitement sages.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—On avait proposé aussi d'interdire le mélange des représentations théâtrales avec d'autres industries ; par exemple, les cafés-spectacles.

M. ALEXANDRE DUMAS.—C'est d'une affaire de police.

M. LE CONSEILLER DEFRESNE.—Comment seront administrés, dans le système de M. Hugo, les théâtres subventionnés ?

M. ALEXANDRE DUMAS.—Je demanderai à la commission la permission de lui dire comment, selon moi, la question devrait être résolue. J'ai quelque expérience de la matière, j'ai beaucoup manié les théâtres, soit comme auteur, soit comme directeur. J'adopte avec empressement l'institution des théâtres de l'État, selon le système de M. Victor Hugo et celui de M. Souvestre.

Je ne crois pas que l'administration directe de ces théâtres par le gouvernement doive être plus dispendieuse pour lui que la tutelle actuelle. Le chiffre total des subventions annuelles s'élève à onze cent et quelques mille francs. Cette somme suffit, selon moi, pour soutenir largement quatre théâtres que je voudrais voir subventionner par le gouvernement : le Théâtre-Français, l'Opéra-Comique, les théâtres des Italiens et de l'Odéon. Je ne parle pas encore de l'Opéra. Tous ces théâtres ont trente-quatre pieds à peu près d'ouverture ; tous pourraient user des mêmes décors. Maintenant, ils ont chacun les leurs ; chacun a une administration pour répondre de ceux qu'il possède. Le jour où les quatre théâtres seront dans la main de la nation, on pourra réunir ces quatre administrations en une seule. Dans chacun des théâtres, on aura le choix des décorations qui auront été faites pour tous les quatre depuis dix ans.

On fera ainsi cent cinquante mille francs d'économie par an, rien qu'en faisant servir la toile et la bois d'un théâtre pour un autre. Je n'ai point parlé de l'Opéra : à cause de ses machines, on doit le laisser à part. Le théâtre de l'Opéra dépense prodigieusement en décors ; dès qu'une toile a servi sur la scène, elle ne peut plus resservir. Le Théâtre-Français tombe dans un excès contraire ; il ne dépense pas par an, plus de quinze mille francs de décorations. Il a un tailleur qui lui fait ses costumes à forfait, pour vingt-quatre mille francs par an. Tel qu'il est, le Théâtre-Français est constitué pour être éternellement en ruine. Ce qu'il faut pour faire vivre un théâtre, c'est une moyenne de recettes. Quand une administration tire ses gains moins du mérite de son

répertoire que du talent d'un acteur, il faut nécessairement qu'elle fasse de mauvaises affaires, car un acteur ne pourra pas jouer tous les jours. Dans ce cas-là, il faut au moins que l'administration ait deux grands acteurs, et qu'ils alternent entre eux afin d'attirer le public tous les jours.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—Ce que la commission demandait, c'était surtout des détails sur le mode d'administration des théâtres qui seraient entretenus par L'État ou par les villes.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Vous me demandez comment je ferais administrer, dans mon système, les théâtres subventionnés, c'est-à-dire les théâtres nationaux et les théâtres municipaux.

Je commence par vous dire que, quoi que l'on fasse, le résultat d'un système est toujours audessous de ce que l'on en attend. Je ne vous promets donc pas la perfection, mais une amélioration immense. Pour la réaliser, il est nécessaire de choisir avec un soin extrême les hommes qui voudront diriger ce que j'appellerais volontiers les *théâtres écoles*. Avec de mauvais choix, l'institution ne vaudrait pas grand'chose ; il arrivera peut-être quelquefois qu'on se trompera ; le ministère, au lieu de prendre Corneille, pourra prendre M. Campistron ; quand il choisira mal, ce seront les théâtres libres qui corrigeront le mal, et, alors, vous aurez le Théâtre-Français ailleurs qu'au Théâtre-Français, mais cela ne durera pas longtemps.

Je voudrais, à la tête des théâtres du gouvernement, des directeurs indépendants les uns des autres, subordonnés tous quatre au directeur, ou plutôt au ministre des arts, et se faisant, pour ainsi dire, concurrence entre eux. Ils seraient rétribués par le gouvernement, et auraient un certain intérêt dans les bénéfices de leurs théâtres.

M. MÉLESVILLE.—Qui est-ce qui nommera, et qui est-ce qui destituera les directeurs ?

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Le ministre compétent les nommera, et ce sera lui aussi qui les destituera. Il en sera pour eux comme pour les préfets.

M. MÉLESVILLE.—Vous leur faites là une position singulière. Supposez un homme honorable, distingué, qui aura administré avec succès la Comédie-Française : un ministre lui a demandé une pièce d'une certaine couleur politique ; le ministre suivant sera défavorable à cette couleur politique. Le directeur, malgré tout son mérite et son service, sera immédiatement destitué.

M. ALEXANDRE DUMAS.—C'est un danger commun à tous les fonctionnaires.

Sur la question de la censure dramatique, voici, maintenant, comment s'exprimait Victor Hugo :

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Le système actuel est détestable. En principe, c'est l'État qui régit la liberté littéraire des théâtres : mais l'État est un être de raison, le gouvernement l'incarne et le représente ; mais le gouvernement a autre chose à faire que de s'occuper des théâtres : il s'en repose sur le ministre de l'intérieur ; mais le ministre de l'intérieur est un personnage bien occupé ; il se fait remplacer par le directeur des beaux-arts ; la besogne déplaît au directeur des beaux-arts, qui la passe au bureau de censure.

Admirez ce système qui commence par l'État, et qui finit par un commis ! Si bien que cette espèce de balayeur d'ordures dramatiques qu'on appelle un censeur peut dire, comme Louis XIV. : "L'État, c'est moi !"

La liberté de la pensée dans un journal, vous la respectez en la surveillant ; vous la confiez au jury. La liberté de la pensée sur le théâtre, vous l'insultez en la réprimant ; vous la livrez à la censure !

Y a-t-il au moins un grand intérêt qui excuse cela ? Point.

Quel bien la censure, appliquée au théâtre, a-t-elle produit depuis trente ans ? A-t-elle empêché une allusion politique de se faire jour ? Jamais. En général, elle a plutôt éveillé qu'endormi l'instinct qui pousse le public à faire, au théâtre, de l'opposition en riant.

Au point de vue politique, elle ne vous a donc rendu aucun service. En a-t-elle rendu au point de vue moral ? Pas davantage.

Rappelez vos souvenirs. A-t-elle empêché des théâtres de s'établir uniquement pour l'exploitation d'un certain côté des appétits les moins nobles de la foule ? Non. Au point de vue moral, la censure n'a été bonne à rien ; au point de vue politique, bonne à rien. Pourquoi donc y tenez-vous ?

Il y a plus. Comme la censure est réputée veiller aux mœurs publiques, le peuple abdique sa propre autorité, sa propre surveillance ; il fait volontiers cause commune avec les licences du théâtre contre les persécutions de la censure. Ainsi que je l'ai dit un jour à l'Assemblée nationale, de juge, il se fait complice.

La difficulté même de créer des censeurs montre combien la censure est un labeur impossible. Ces fonctions si difficiles, si délicates, sur lesquelles pèse une responsabilité si énorme, elles devraient logiquement être exercées par les hommes les plus éminents en littérature. En trouverait-on parmi eux qui les

accepteraient? Ils rougiraient seulement de se les entendre proposer. Vous n'aurez donc jamais, pour les remplir, que des hommes sans valeur personnelle, et j'ajouterai, des hommes qui s'estiment peu; et ce sont ces hommes que vous faites arbitres, de quoi? De la littérature! Au nom de quoi? De la morale!

Les partisans de la censure nous disent: "Oui, elle a été mal exercée jusqu'ici; mais on peut l'améliorer." Comment l'améliorer? On n'indique guère qu'un moyen: faire exercer la censure par des personnages considérables, des membres de l'Institut, de l'Assemblée nationale, et autres, qui fonctionneront au nom du gouvernement, avec une certaine indépendance, dit-on, une certaine autorité, et, à coup sûr, une grande honorabilité. Il n'y a à cela qu'une petite objection, c'est que c'est impossible. . . .

Croyez-moi, n'accouplez jamais ce mot, qui est si noble, l'Institut de France, avec ce mot qui l'est si peu, la censure!

Dans votre comité de censure, mettez-vous des membres de l'Assemblée nationale élus par cette assemblée? Mais, d'abord, j'espère que l'Assemblée refuserait tout net; et puis, si elle y consentait, en quoi elle aurait grand tort, la majorité vous enverrait des hommes de parti qui vous feraient de belle besogne!

Pour commission de censure, vous bornerez-vous à prendre la commission des théâtres? Il y a un élément qui y serait nécessaire; eh bien! cet élément n'y sera pas. Je veux parler des auteurs dramatiques. Tous refuseront, comptez-y. Que sera alors votre commission de censure? Ce que serait une commission de marine sans marins.

Difficultés sur difficultés. Mais je suppose votre commission composée, soit; fonctionnera-t-elle? Point. Vous figurez-vous un représentant du peuple, un conseiller d'État, un conseiller à la cour de cassation, allant dans les théâtres, et s'occupant de savoir si telle pièce n'est pas faite plutôt pour éveiller des appétits sensuels que des idées élevées. Vous les figurez-vous assistant aux répétitions, et faisant allonger les jupes des danseuses? Pour ne parler que de la censure du manuscrit, vous les figurez-vous marchandant avec l'auteur la suppression d'un coq-à-l'âne ou d'un calembour?

Vous me direz: "Cette commission ne jugera qu'en appel." De deux choses l'une: ou elle jugera en appel sur tous les détails qui feront difficulté entre l'auteur et les censeurs inférieurs, et l'auteur ne s'entendra jamais avec les censeurs inférieurs: autant alors, ne faire qu'un degré; ou bien elle se bornera, sans entrer

dans les détails, à accorder ou à refuser l'autorisation : alors, la tyrannie sera plus grande qu'elle n'a jamais été.

Tenez, renonçons à la censure, et acceptons résolûment la liberté. C'est le plus simple, le plus digne et le plus sûr.

En dépit de tout sophisme contraire, j'avoue qu'en présence de la liberté de la presse, je ne puis redouter la liberté des théâtres. La liberté de la presse présente, à mon avis, dans une mesure beaucoup plus considérable, tous les inconvénients de la liberté du théâtre.

Mais liberté implique responsabilité. A tout abus, il faut la répression. Pour la presse, je viens de le rappeler, vous avez le jury ; pour le théâtre, qu'aurez-vous ?

La cour d'assises ? des tribunaux ordinaires ? Impossible.

Les délits que l'on peut commettre par la voie du théâtre sont de toutes sortes. Il y a ceux que peut commettre volontairement un auteur écrivant dans une pièce des choses contraires aux mœurs ; il y a, ensuite, les délits de l'acteur, ceux qu'il peut commettre en ajoutant aux paroles, par des gestes ou des inflexions de voix, un sens répréhensible qui n'est pas celui de l'auteur.

Il y a les délits du directeur, par exemple : des exhibitions de nudités sur la scène ; puis les délits du décorateur, résultant de certains emblèmes dangereux ou séditieux mêlés à une décoration ; puis ceux du costumier, puis ceux du coiffeur . . . oui, du coiffeur : un toupet peut être factieux ; une paire de favoris a fait défendre *Vautrin*. Enfin, il y a les délits du public : un applaudissement qui accentue un vers, un sifflet qui va plus haut que l'acteur, et plus loin que l'auteur.

Comment votre jury, composé de bons bourgeois, se tirera-t-il de là ?

Comment démêlera-t-il ce qui est à celui-ci, et ce qui est à celui-là ? le fait de l'auteur, le fait du comédien, et le fait du public ? Quelquefois le délit sera un sourire, une grimace, un geste. Transporterez-vous les jurés au théâtre pour le juger ? Ferez-vous siéger la cour d'assises au parterre ?

Supposez-vous,—ce qui, du reste, ne sera pas,—que les jurys, en général, se défiant de toutes ces difficultés, et voulant arriver à une répression efficace, justement parce qu'ils n'entendent pas grand'chose aux délits de théâtre, suivront aveuglement les indications du ministère public, et condamneront, sans broncher, sur ouï-dire ? Alors, savez-vous ce que vous aurez fait ? Vous aurez créé la pire des censures, la censure de la peur. Les directeurs, tremblant devant les arrêts qui seraient leur ruine, mutileront la pensée, et supprimeront la liberté.

Vous êtes placés entre deux systèmes impossibles : la censure préventive, que je vous défie d'organiser convenablement ; la censure répressive, la seule admissible maintentant, mais qui échappe aux moyens du droit commun.

Je ne vous qu'une manière de sortir de cette double impossibilité.

Pour arriver à la solution, reprenons le système théâtral tel que je vous l'ai indiqué. Vous avez un certain nombre de théâtres subventionnés ; tous les autres sont livres à l'industrie privée ; à Paris, il y a quatre théâtres subventionnés par le gouvernement, et quatre par la ville.

L'état normal de Paris ne comporte pas plus de seize théâtres. Sur ces seize théâtres, la moitié sera donc sous l'influence directe du gouvernement ou de la ville ; l'autre moitié fonctionnera sous l'empire des restrictions de police et autres que dans votre loi vous imposerez à l'industrie théâtrale.

Pour alimenter tous ces théâtres et ceux de la province, dont la position sera analogue, vous aurez la corporation des auteurs dramatiques, corporation composée d'environ trois cents personnes, et ayant un syndicat.

Cette corporation a le plus sérieux intérêt à maintenir le théâtre dans la limite où il doit rester pour ne point troubler la paix de l'État et l'honnêteté publique. Cette corporation, par la nature même des choses, a sur ses membres un ascendant disciplinaire considérable. Je suppose que l'État reconnaît cette corporation, et qu'il en fait son instrument.

Chaque année, elle nomme dans son sein un conseil de prud'hommes, un jury. Ce jury, élu au suffrage universel, se composera de huit ou dix membres ;—ce seront toujours, soyez-en sûrs, les personnages les plus considérés et les plus considérables de l'association.

Ce jury, que vous apellerez *jury de blâme*, ou de tout autre nom que vous voudrez, sera saisi, soit sur la plainte de l'autorité publique, soit sur celle de la commission dramatique elle même, de tous les délits de théâtre commis par les auteurs, les directeurs, les comédiens. Composé d'hommes spéciaux, investi d'une sorte de magistrature de famille, il aura la plus grande autorité, il comprendra parfaitement la matière, il sera sévère dans la répression, et il saura superposer la peine au délit.

Le jury dramatique juge les délits ; s'il les reconnaît, il les blâme ; s'il blâme deux fois, il y a lieu à la suspension de la pièce, et à une amende considérable, qui peut, si elle est infligée à un

auteur, être prélevée sur les droits d'auteur recueillis par les agents de la société.

Si un auteur est blâmé trois fois, il y a lieu à le rayer de la liste des associés. Cette radiation est une peine très-grave : elle n'atteint pas seulement l'auteur dans son honneur, elle l'atteint dans sa fortune, elle implique pour lui la privation à peu près complète de ses droits de province.

Maintenant, croyez-vous qu'un auteur aille trois fois devant le jury dramatique? Pour moi, je ne le crois pas. Tout auteur traduit devant le jury se défendra ; s'il est blâmé, il sera profondément affecté par ce blâme, et, soyez tranquilles, je connais l'esprit de cette excellente et utile association, vous n'aurez pas de récidives.

Vous aurez donc ainsi, dans le sein de l'association dramatique elle-même, les gardiens les plus vigilants de l'intérêt public.

C'est la seule manière possible d'organiser la censure répressive. De cette manière vous conciliez les deux choses qui font tout le problème : l'intérêt de la société et l'intérêt de la liberté. . . .

En dehors du syndicat de l'ordre des auteurs dramatiques, il y aura aussi un juge qui veillera à la police de l'*audience*, à la dignité de la représentation ; ce juge, ce sera le public. Sa puissance est grande et sérieuse ; elle sera plus sérieuse encore quand il se sentira réellement investi d'une sorte de magistrature par la liberté même. Ce juge a puissance de vie et de mort ; il peut faire tomber la toile, et alors tout est dit.

M. LE PRÉSIDENT.—Mais ce juge n'est pas un, la majorité décidera, la minorité protestera, et une lutte personnelle s'engagera pour trancher la question.

M. SOUVESTRE.—Les troubles seront plus rares que vous ne le croyez. Je n'en veux pour preuve que ce qui s'est passé au Vaudeville dans ces derniers temps. On y jouait des pièces faites pour exciter la passion et la répulsion d'une partie de la population parisienne. La majorité du public s'est prononcée en faveur de ces pièces ; la minorité s'est retirée, s'inclinant ainsi devant le jugement de la majorité. Des faits analogues seront de plus en plus communs à mesure qu'on s'habituera à la liberté du théâtre.

M. LE CONSEILLER BÉHIC.—L'organisation de la censure répressive, telle que la propose M. Victor Hugo, présente une difficulté dont je le rends juge. On ne peut, maintenant, faire partie de l'association des auteurs dramatiques qu'après avoir fait jouer une pièce. M. Victor Hugo propose de maintener ces conditions ou des conditions analogues d'incorporation. Quel

système répressif appliquera-t-il alors à la première pièce d'un auteur?

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Le système de droit commun, comme aux pièces de tous les auteurs qui ne feront pas partie de la société, la répression par le jury.

M. LE CONSEILLER BÉHIC.—J'ai une autre critique plus grave à faire au système de M. Victor Hugo. Toute personne qui remplit des conditions déterminées a droit de se faire inscrire dans l'ordre des avocats. De plus, les avocats peuvent seuls plaider. Si un certain esprit littéraire prédominait dans votre association, ne serait-il pas à craindre qu'elle repoussât de son sein les auteurs dévoués à des idées contraires, ou même que ceux-ci ne refusassent de se soumettre à un tribunal évidemment hostile, et aimassent mieux se tenir en dehors? Ne risque-t-on pas de voir alors, en dehors de la corporation des auteurs dramatiques, un si grand nombre d'auteurs, que son syndicat deviendrait impuissant à réaliser la mission que lui attribue M. Victor Hugo?

M. SCRIBE.—Je demande la permission d'appuyer cette objection par quelques mots. Il y a des esprits indépendants qui refuseront d'entrer dans notre association précisément parce qu'ils craindront une justice disciplinaire, à laquelle il n'y aura pas chance d'échapper, et ceux-là seront sans doute les plus dangereux.

J'irai plus loin. Si vous attribuez à notre association le caractère que lui veut M. Victor Hugo, vous changez le nature du contrat qui nous unit, et que nous avons souscrit. Or, je suis persuadé que, dès que ce changement aura lieu, beaucoup de nos confrères se sépareront de nous immédiatement: il y en a plusieurs que trouvent déjà bien lourd le joug si léger que leur imposent nos conventions mutuelles.

Du reste, il y a, dans le système de M. Victor Hugo, des idées larges et vraies, qu'il me semble bon de conserver dans le système préventif, le seul qui, selon moi, puisse être établi avec quelque chance de succès. Il n'est personne de ceux qui veulent l'établir dans la nouvelle loi qui ne le veuille avec des garanties qu'il n'a jamais eues jusqu'ici. Je suppose la censure à deux degrés. Ne pourrait-on pas composer la commission d'appel de personnes considérables de professions diverses, parmi lesquelles se trouveraient, en certain nombre, des auteurs dramatiques élus par le suffrage de leurs confrères?

Si ces auteurs étaient désignés par le ministre, par le directeur des beaux-arts, ils n'accepteraient sans doute pas; mais, nommés par leurs confrères, ils accepteront. J'avais soutenu le contraire

en combattant le principe de M. Souvestre ; les paroles de M. Victor Hugo m'ont fait changer d'opinion. Celui de nous qui serait élu ainsi ne verrait pas de honte à exercer les fonctions de censeur ; il s'en ferait même honneur, car il sentirait qu'elles lui ont été confiées, non pour opprimer, mais pour protéger et défendre les auteurs dramatiques.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Personne n'accepterait. Les auteurs dramatiques consentiront à exercer la censure répressive, parce que c'est une magistrature ; ils refuseront d'exercer la censure préventive, parce que c'est une police.

J'ai dit les motifs qui, à tous les points de vue, me font repousser la censure préventive ; je n'y reviens pas.

Maintenant, j'arrive à cette objection, que m'a faite M. Béhic, et qu'a appuyée M. Scribe. On m'a dit qu'un grand nombre d'auteurs dramatiques pourraient se tenir, pour des motifs divers, en dehors de la corporation, et qu'alors mon but serait manqué.

Cette difficulté est grave. Je n'essayerai point de la tourner ; je l'aborderai franchement, en disant ma pensée tout entière. Pour réaliser la réforme, il faut agir rigoureusement, et mêler à l'esprit de liberté l'esprit de gouvernement. Pourquoi voulez-vous que l'État, au moment de donner une liberté considérable, n'impose pas des conditions aux hommes appelés à jouir de cette liberté ? L'État dira : "Tout individu qui voudra faire représenter une pièce sur un théâtre du territoire français pourra la faire représenter sans la soumettre à la censure ; mais il devra être membre de la société des auteurs dramatiques." Personne, de cette manière, ne restera en dehors de la société : personne, pas même les nouveaux auteurs, car on pourrait exiger, pour l'entrée dans la société, la composition, et non la représentation, d'une ou plusieurs pièces.

Le temps me manque ici pour dire ma pensée dans toute son étendue ; je la compléterai ailleurs et dans quelque autre occasion. Je voudrais qu'on organisât une corporation, non pas seulement de tous les auteurs dramatiques, mais encore de tous les lettrés. Tous les délits de presse auraient leur répression dans les jugements des tribunaux d'honneur de la corporation. Ne sent-on pas tous les jours l'inefficacité de la répression par les cours d'assises ?

Tout homme qui écrirait et ferait publier quelque chose serait nécessairement compris dans la corporation des gens de lettres. A la place de l'anarchie qui existe maintenant parmi nous, vous auriez une autorité ; cette autorité servirait puissamment à la gloire et à la tranquillité du pays.

Aucune tyrannie dans ce système : l'organisation. A chacun la

liberté entière de la manifestation de sa pensée, sauf à l'astreindre à une condition préalable de garantie qu'il serait possible à tous de remplir.

Les idées que je viens d'exprimer, j'y crois de toute la force de mon âme ; mais je pense, en même temps, qu'elles ne sont pas encore mûres. Leur jour viendra ; je le hâterai pour ma part. Je prévois les lenteurs : je suis de ceux qui acceptent sans impatience la collaboration du temps.

M. ÉMILE SOUVESTRE.—Avant l'arrivée de M. Victor Hugo dans le sein de la commission, et sans connaître les moyens qu'il supposait nécessaires pour organiser la censure répressive, j'avais émis des idées analogues à celles qu'il vient de développer. Cette rencontre fortuite est pour moi un motif nouveau et puissant de ne voir le port que là où je l'ai indiqué : je pense qu'elle aura frappé la commission.

Je dois ajouter qu'on n'aurait pas autant de peine à établir un tribunal disciplinaire de gens de lettres ou d'auteurs dramatiques que le croit M. Scribe ; maintenant, avec notre organisation imparfaite, très-souvent les bureaux de ces sociétés rendent des sentences arbitrales aux-quelles les parties se soumettent très-volontiers. C'est déjà un commencement de juridiction.

M. LE CONSEILLER DEFRESNE.—Ce que M. Victor Hugo et M. Souvestre demandent, c'est tout bonnement l'établissement d'une jurande ou maîtrise littéraire. Je ne dis pas cela pour les blâmer. L'institution qu'ils demandent serait une grande et utile institution ; mais, comme eux, je pense qu'il n'y faut songer que pour un temps plus ou moins éloigné.

M. VICTOR HUGO.—Les associations de l'avenir ne seront point celles qu'ont vues nos pères. Les associations du passé étaient basées sur le principe de l'autorité, et faites pour le soutenir et l'organiser ; les associations de l'avenir organiseront et développeront la liberté.

Je voudrais voir désormais la loi organiser des groupes d'individualités, pour aider, par ces associations, au progrès véritable de la liberté. La liberté jaillirait de ces associations, et rayonnerait sur tout le pays. Il y aurait liberté d'enseignement avec des conditions fortes imposées à ceux qui voudraient enseigner. Je n'entends pas la liberté d'enseignement comme ce qu'on appelle le parti catholique : liberté de la parole avec des conditions imposées à ceux qui en usent devant les tribunaux, liberté du théâtre avec des conditions analogues ; voilà comme j'entends la solution du problème.

J'ajoute un détail qui complète les idées que j'ai émises sur l'organisation de la liberté théâtrale. Cette organisation, on ne pourra guère la commencer sérieusement que quand une réforme dans la haute administration aura réuni dans une même main tout ce qui se rapporte à la protection que l'État doit aux beaux-arts, aux créations de l'intelligence ; et, cette main, je ne veux pas que ce soit celle d'un directeur, mais celle d'un ministre. Le pilote de l'intelligence ne saurait être trop haut placé. Voyez, à l'heure qu'il est, quel chaos !

Le ministre de la justice a l'imprimerie nationale ; le ministre de l'intérieur, les théâtres, les musées ; le ministre de l'instruction publique, les sociétés savantes ; le ministre des cultes, les églises ; le ministre des travaux publics, les grandes constructions nationales. Tout cela devrait être réuni.

Un même esprit devrait coordonner dans un vaste système tout cet ensemble, et le féconder. Que peuvent, maintenant, toutes ces pensées divergentes, qui tirent chacune de leur côté ? Rien, qu'empêcher tout progrès réel.

Ce ne sont point là des utopies, des rêves. Il faut organiser. L'autorité avait organisé autrefois assez mal, car rien de véritablement bon ne peut sortir d'elle seule. La liberté l'a débordée et l'a vaincue à jamais. La liberté est un principe fécond ; mais, pour qu'elle produise ce qu'elle peut et doit produire, il faut l'organiser.

Organisez donc dans le sens de la liberté, et non pas dans le sens de l'autorité. La liberté, elle est maintenant nécessaire. Pourquoi, d'ailleurs, s'en effrayer ? Nous avons la liberté du théâtre depuis dix-huit mois ; quel grand danger a-t-elle fait courir à la France ?

Et, cependant, elle existe maintenant sans être entourée d'aucune des garanties que je voudrais établir. Il y a eu de ces pièces qu'on appelle réactionnaires ; savez-vous ce qui en est résulté ? C'est que beaucoup de gens qui n'étaient pas républicains avant ces pièces le sont devenus après. Beaucoup des amis de la liberté ne voulaient pas de la République, parce qu'ils croyaient que l'intolérance était dans la nature de ce gouvernement ; ces hommes-là se sont réconcilies avec la République le jour où ils ont vu qu'elle donnait un libre cours à l'expression des opinions, et qu'on pouvait se moquer d'elle, qu'elle était bonne princesse, en un mot. Tel a été l'effet des pièces réactionnaires. La République s'est fait honneur en les supportant.

Voyez maintenant ce qui arrive ! la réaction contre la réaction commence. Dernièrement, on a représenté une pièce ultra-réac-

tionnaire : elle a été sifflée ! Et c'est dans ce moment que vous songeriez à vous donner tort en rétablissant la censure ! Vous relèveriez à l'instant même l'esprit d'opposition qui est au fond du caractère national !

Ce qui s'est passé pour la politique s'est passé aussi pour la morale. En réalité, il s'est joué, depuis dix-huit mois, moins de pièces décolletées qu'il ne s'en jouait d'ordinaire sous l'empire de la censure. Le public sait que le théâtre est libre ; il est plus difficile. Voilà la situation d'esprit où est le public. Pourquoi donc vouloir faire mal ce que la foule fait bien ?

Laissez là la censure, organisez ; mais, je vous le répète, organisez la liberté !

[See text, p. 174. The following precedes the letter to M. S. Henry Berthoud, in the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, 1854.]

Nous empruntous textuellement tout ce qui va suivre au *Musée des Familles*

HISTOIRE LITTÉRAIRE ET DRAMATIQUE DU XIXe SIÈCLE

Tour de Nesle.—M. Alex. Dumas—M. Gaillardet—M. Jules Janin —M. Harel—M. Barba

Une seule phrase, jetée au milieu d'un article publié par le *Musée des Familles*, a fait naître de tristes débats que la loi autant que notre esprit d'impartialité nous contraignent de reproduire. Si nous avons consenti à le faire aussi longuement, c'est afin de mettre un terme à cette lutte littéraire, de clore cette véritable mêlée dramatique dans laquelle ne manque aucun personnage. L'auteur en vogue malgré l'éclat qui s'attache à son nom, l'écrivain inconnu malgré l'intérêt qu' inspire tout jeune homme à ses débuts dans une carrière difficile,—le directeur de théâtre, malgré ses habiles combinaisons pour faire payer au parterre ses victories dramatiques,—l'éditeur théâtral marchandant la valeur litéraire du drame moderne,—et enfin, enfin le redoutable feuilletoniste des *Débats*, celui dont les deux seules initiales sont la terreur des vaudevillistes et qui jusqu'à présent avait joui du privilége de pouvoir attaquer sans réplique. Dans ce drame, qui se passe hors la scène et dans les colonnes du *Journal à deux sous*, tous les rôles sont remplis, tous les caractères se développent parfaitement, quelque confuse que paraisse l'action, et quelque hérissées de notes et de pièces que soient les pages du récit.

Un seul espoir affaiblit le regret que nous éprouvons de servir

d'organes à une si triste révélation des mœurs littéraires de notre époque. L'immense publicité que lui donne le *Musée des Familles* éclairera, nous l'espérons, cette foule de jeunes hommes, qui, trompés par leur imagination, aspirent à quitter leur province, leur famille, leur foyer, leur profession modeste et lucrative pour les échanger contre la gloire et le bien-être de la vie littéraire et artistique de Paris. Qu'ils regardent de près quelle est cette gloire, quel est ce bien-être !—

[See p. 204. The following additional passage occurs in the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. iv., 1854.]

They forgot that a soldier is an impassive tool, who is placed inflexibly between the two words *obedience* and *disobedience*, and that, from the standpoint of martial law, to obey is his duty, to disobey means disgrace. The soldiers had only done their duty by obeying. Men of intelligence fully understand this distinction ; but the masses class together under the same malediction both the steel and the arm which wields it.

[See p. 216. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. iv., 1854.]

Is it not strange to hear Charles X., an exile in England, continuing to call himself King *by the grace of God*? One recalls the poor bricklayer who fell from the top of a ladder, to whom, as he picked himself up with one leg only broken, a passer-by remarked :—

"Ah ! friend, Providence has been very gracious to you !"

"To me !—He might have favoured me with the missing rung of the ladder."

But let us return to our proclamation.

[See p. 316. Report of 2 December 1831.]

No. 1034.

Les renseignements les plus scrupuleux ont été pris sur M. Véret et les personnes désignées dans la note dont le numéro est ci-contre.

M. Véret est arrivé d'un petit voyage il y a quinze jours, d'où il avait conduit les fils d'un ami qu'il a eu la douleur de voir mourir peu de temps après son arrivée.

Le 25 de ce mois, en arrivant à Monceau (parc), où il est logé, il y trouva MM. Teulon, député du Gard, et Augier, avocat, qui

étaient venus demander à dîner à madame Véret ; il n'y avait que ces deux messieurs d'étrangers. Ils y ont, en effet, dîné, et n'en sont sortis qu'à onze heures un quart. Le 26 au matin, madame Véret a été occupée toute la matinée à savonner, et, l'après-midi, à repasser son linge, et n'est point sortie dans le parc de toute la journée ; mais, le dimanche 27, elle s'y est promenée pendant une demi-heure avec un parent de M. Véret ; j'ignore sur quel objet ils se sont entretenus.

Ce qu'il y a de certain, c'est que M. Véret, quoique ayant de l'esprit, est peut-être l'homme du monde le moins propre à la politique, et qu'il ne s'en occupe jamais.

Le donneur d'avis aurait pu signaler aussi comme fréquentant la maison de M. Véret : MM. Crémieux, Madier de Montjau, Augier, gendre de Pigaulte-Lebrun, et Oudard, secrétaire des commandements de la reine.

Le préfet qui commande la maison de M. Véret, et qui, dit-on, doit être connu de M. Thibault,—et non Thiébault,—médecin, rue de Provence, 56, ne serait-il point M. le comte de Celles, qui, à une époque déjà ancienne, était préfet à Amsterdam, lorsque M. Véret y était commissaire de police ? M. le comte de Celles, honoré des bontés du roi depuis longtemps, pourrait-il donner des soupçons d'être en opposition au gouvernement du roi Louis-Philippe ? On peut affirmer que non.

La liaison de M. Véret avec MM. Teulon, député du Gard ; Augier, avocat ; Rousselle et Madier de Montjau, ainsi que M. Detrée, demeurant rue Planche-Mibray, n° 3, date de 1815, lorsque M. Véret, était commissaire de police à Nîmes, et que, d'accord ensemble, ils s'opposèrent avec énergie aux massacres qui eurent lieu dans cette ville. Ce furent encore eux qui rédigèrent la fameuse protestation de M. Madier de Montjau, qui valut à celui-ci d'être censuré à la cour royale de Paris.

M. Thibault, médecin demeurant, rue de Provence, n° 56, est l'ami et le médecin de M. Véret et de sa famille, et, en cette double qualité, il va quelquefois chez la famille Véret, mais rarement sans y être appelé. J'ai déjà rendu compte, dans un précédent rapport, de l'opinion de ce jeune homme, qui a l'habitude de s'exprimer librement et avec franchise, mais qui, j'en ai la certitude, est incapable de nuire au gouvernement du roi Louis-Philippe, ni à aucun ministère ; ce jeune homme, qui a du talent, est recherché des meilleures sociétés de la capitale, et même d'opinions très-opposées ; il appartient, comme je l'ai déjà dit, à une famille de distinction : un grand vicaire de Lisieux est son oncle.

M. Alexandre Dumas, demeurant rue Sainte-Lazare, dans une maison bâtie par des Anglais, est, en effet, un républicain dans toute l'acception du terme. Il était employé dans la maison de M. le duc d'Orléans, avant la révolution de juillet. Il y a resta encore quelques temps après; mais, enfin, n'ayant pas voulu prêter serment de fidélité au roi Louis-Philippe, il quitta son service. Pendant tout le temps qu'il a été employé dans la maison de monseigneur le duc d'Orléans, il a fréquenté la maison de M. Véret; mais on peut affirmer, sans crainte d'être démenti, qui, depuis ce temps, il n'a pas été une fois chez lui.

M. Detrée est propriétaire de la maison où il demeure, rue Planche-Mibray, n° 3, depuis sept ou huit ans, et où il tient un bureau de loterie; il a été anciennement chirurgien-major aux armées; cet homme jouit de la réputation d'un homme de bien, et est parfaitement dans les principes du gouvernement actuel. Sous le gouvernement déchu, il passait pour être bonapartiste; mais on peut dire que c'est un homme à peu près nul. J'ai déjà dit depuis quelle époque il est lié d'amitié avec M. Véret.

M. Rousselle, homme de loi, ami de M. Véret, demeure depuis plusieurs années rue de la Coutellerie, n° 10, où il tient un cabinet d'affaires et a une nombreuse clientèle; il est trés-considéré dans son quartier, a la réputation d'avoir beaucoup d'esprit, a vu la révolution de juillet avec plaisir; depuis ce temps, il fait parte de la garde nationale, et en remplit exactement tous les devoirs; son opinion est et a toujours été très-modérée, et, quoique ami de la famille Véret, il n'y va que rarement le soir.

M. Augier, gendre de M. Pigault-Lebrun, a la réputation d'être un avocat distingué, ami intime de M. Véret et de M. Teulon, député du Gard, jouissant de l'estime générale, et, à ce qu'on m'a assuré, grand partisan du roi Louis-Philippe.

M. Puget, élève en droit, natif de Nîmes, est fils d'un ami de M. Véret, et ce n'est qu'en cette qualité qu'il est reçu chez lui, et encore peu souvent; ce jeune homme a demeuré pendant dix-huit mois en garni, rue Hautefeuille, n° 11, où il s'est fait estimer pour sa douceur et sa bonne conduite; depuis le 1er novembre, il est logé rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain-des-Prés, n° 9, où il est en pension, et on ne l'a pas encore entendu parler politique.

Le sieur Bluret ne demeure rue Jacob, n° 6, que depuis quinze jours; on ne sait où il demeurait auparavant: il prend la qualité d'homme de lettres, et n'en paraît pas plus heureux. Tant qu'à son opinion, on ne la connaît pas, n'étant connu de personne dans la maison, ni dans le quartier.

Le sieur Zacharie demeure rue de Bussy, n° 30, depuis plus d'un an. Avant, il travaillait, à Lyon, dans une fabrique de châles. Croyant qu'à Paris cet état était plus avantageux, il y vint avec sa femme, et s'y est fixé ; mais, ayant été sans ouvrage, et se trouvant dans la misère, il a réclamé des secours de la maison du roi. Depuis quelque temps, on dit qu'il est occupé à la construction du nouveau pont en face des Saints-Pères. Cet homme n'a point d'opinion, et, quoique pas heureux, jouit de la réputation d'un honnête homme.

Le sieur Riverand a demeuré rue Saint-Martin, n° 222, pendant deux mois seulement. On ne sait où il demeurait avant, et il y a environ trois mois qu'il a quitté ce logement pour aller, a-t-on dit, loger rue du Mail ; mais toutes les recherches pour l'y trouver ont été inutiles. Ayant laissé des dettes rue Saint-Martin, on a des raisons de croire qu'il cache sa nouvelle demeure. Quoi qu'il en soit, on n'en dit ni bien ni mal dans son ancien domicile de la rue Saint-Martin ; seulement, on sait qu'il n'était pas heureux.

D'après les renseignements que j'ai pu recueillir sur M. Véret, je puis affirmer qu'il jouit de l'estime de tous les gens de bien, qu'il est aimé dans la maison du roi ; mais il n'est pas sans avoir quelques ennemis qui peut-être sont jaloux de la faveur dont il jouit, et, si j'en crois quelques mots échappés à quelques personnes, M. le marquis d'Estrada pourrait bien être pour quelque chose dans les déclarations contre M. Véret.

Signé : BINET

[See p. 320. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. v., 1855.]

I awoke at Montereau. I made up my mind to stop at every place renowned in history. I began at Montereau, celebrated for two events, one during the Middle Ages and one in modern times. Jean-sans-peur was assassinated there and Napoleon won a battle there.

[See p. 401. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vi., 1855.]

These three days of hospitable entertainment left such a pleasant recollection in my memory as will easily account for the different episodes I shall have to relate concerning that adorable princess and the other members of her family.

[See p. 472. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vii., 1855.]

But my reader will not lose anything thereby, for I know these lines by heart and I will repeat them—

"Ce vieillard m'a maudit!"

This is the second time that Triboulet repeats this hemistich. You see clearly that Victor Hugo was undoubtedly right.

"Pendant qu'il me parlait,
Pendant qu'il me criait: Oh! sois maudit, valet!
Je raillais sa douleur! Oh! oui, j'étais infâme!
Je riais, mais j'avais l'épouvante dans l'âme.
Maudit!"

What the deuce! you see clearly, my learned critic, that this time you are wrong and that the first act is connected with the second.

"Ah! la nature et les hommes m'ont fait
Bien méchant, bien cruel et bien lâche en effet!
O rage! être bouffon! O rage! être difforme!
Toujours cette pensée! et qu'on veille, qu'on dorme,
Quand du monde en rêvant vous avez fait le tour,
Retomber sur ceci. Je suis bouffon de cour!
Ne vouloir, ne pouvoir, ne devoir et ne faire
Que rire! . . . Quel excès d'opprobre et de misère!
Quoi! ce qu'ont les soldats, ramassés par troupeau
Autour de ce haillon qu'on appele drapeau!
Ce qui reste, après tout, au mendiant d'Espagne,
A l'esclave à Tunis, au forçat dans son bagne,
A tout homme, ici-bas, qui respire et se meut,
Le droit de ne pas rire et de pleurer, s'il veut
Je ne l'ai pas! Oh Dieu! triste et d'humeur mauvaise,
Pris dans un corps mal fait où je suis mal à l'aise,
Tout rempli de dégoût de ma difformité,
Jaloux de toute force et de toute beauté,
Entouré de splendeurs qui me rendent plus sombre,
Parfois, farouche et seul, si je cherche un peu d'ombre,
Si je veux recueillir et calmer un moment
Mon âme qui sanglote et pleure amèrement,
Mon maître tout à coup survient, mon joyeux maître,
Qui, tout puissant, aimé des femmes, content d'être,
A force de bonheur oubliant le tombeau,
Quand, jeune, et bien portant, et roi de France, et beau,
Me pousse avec le pied dans l'ombre où je soupire,
Et me dit en bâillant: Bouffon! fais-moi donc rire!

O pauvre fou de cour !—C'est un homme après tout !
Eh Bien ! la passion qui dans son âme bout,
La rancune, l'orgueil, la colère hautaine,
L'envie et la fureur dont sa poitrine est pleine,
Le calcul éternel de quelqu' affreux dessein,
Tous ces noirs sentiments qui lui rongent le sein,
Sur un signe du maître, en lui-même il les broie,
Et, pour quiconque en veut, il en fait de la joie !
Abjection ! s'il marche, ou se lève ou s'assied,
Toujours il sent le fil qui lui tire le pied.
—Mépris de toute part !—Tout homme l'humilie.
Ou bien, c'est une femme, une femme, jolie,
Demi-nue et charmante, et dont il voudrait bien,
Qui le laisse jouer sur son lit comme un chien !—
Aussi, mes beaux seigneurs, mes railleurs gentilhommes ;
Oh ! comme il vous hait bien ! quels ennemis nous sommes !
Comme il vous fait parfois payer cher vos dédains !
Comme il leur sait trouver des contre-coups soudain !
Il est le noir démon qui conseille le maître.
Vos fortunes, messieurs, n'ont plus le temps de naître.
Et, sitôt qu'il a pu dans ses ongles saisir
Quelque belle existence, il l'effeuille à plaisir !
—Vous l'avez fait méchant ! O douleur ! est-ce vivre ?
Mêler du fiel au vin dont un autre s'enivre,
Si quelque bon instinct germe en soi, l'effacer,
Etourdir de grelots l'esprit qui veut penser,
Traverser chaque jour, comme un mauvais génie,
Des fêtes qui, pour vous, ne sont qu'une ironie,
Démolir le bonheur des heureux par ennui,
N'avoir d'ambition qu' aux ruines d'autrui,
Et, contre tous, partout où le hasard vous pose
Porter toujours en soi, mêler à toute chose,
Et garder, et cacher, sous un rire moqueur,
Un fond de vieille haine, extravasée au cœur !
Oh ! je suis malheureux !"

Surely, Virgil and those with him when they visited the seventh circle of Hell—read the *Divine Comedy*—never heard a more sorrowful or more bitter wail of despair.

The critic next analyses the third scene.

[See p. 479. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vii., 1855.]

But here is the play against which the Government seeks to raise numerous objections ! Behold immorality and obscenity exposed. What a pity ! The power had its hidden reasons (which

we will reveal presently), for stirring up as many prejudices against *le Roi s'amuse* as possible. It would have liked the public to smother the play without a hearing, on the ground of an imaginary wrong, as Othello smothered Desdemona—HONEST IAGO!

[See p. 481. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vii., 1855.]

Ecoutez :—

"C'est bien lui !—Maintenant, monde, regarde-moi,
Ceci, c'est un bouffon, et ceci c'est un roi !
Et quel roi ! le premier de tous ! le roi suprême !
Le voilà sous mes pieds, je le tiens, c'est lui-même.
La Seine pour sépulcre, et ce sac pour linceul,
Qui donc a fait cela !
Eh bien, oui, c'est un seul.
Non, je ne reviens pas d'avoir eu la victoire,
Et les peuples demain refuseront d'y croire.
Que dira l'avenir? Quel long étonnement !
Parmi les nations, d'un tel événement !
Sort, qui nous mets ici, comme tu nous en ôtes !
Une des majestés humaines les plus hautes,
Quoi, François de Valois, ce prince au cœur de feu,
Rival de Charles-Quint, un roi de France, un Dieu,
—A l'éternité, près,—un gagneur de batailles
Dont le pas ébranlait les bases des murailles,
L'homme de Marignan, lui qui, toute une nuit,
Poussa des bataillons l'un sur l'autre à grand bruit,
Et qui, quand le jour vint, les mains de sang trempeés
N'avait plus qu'un tronçon de trois grandes épées,
Ce roi ! de l'univers par sa gloire étoilé,
Dieu ! comme il se sera brusquement en allé !
Emporté tout à coup, dans toute sa puissance,
Avec son nom, son bruit, et sa cour qui l'encense,
Emporté, comme on fait d'un enfant mal venu,
Une nuit qu'il tonnait, par quelqu'un d'inconnu !
Quoi ! cette cour, ce siècle et ce règne,—fumée !
Ce roi, qui se levait dans une aube enflammée !
—Éteint, évanoui, dissipé dans les airs !
Apparu, disparu,—comme un de ces éclairs !
Et peut-être demain des crieurs inutiles.
Montrant des tonnes d'or, s'en iront par les villes
Et crieront au passant, de surprise éperdu :
—A qui retrouvera François premier perdu !
—C'est merveilleux !—

Ma fille, ô ma pauvre affligée,
Le voilà donc puni, te voilà donc vengée !
Oh ! que j'avais besoin de son sang ! Un peu d'or,
Et je l'ai ! Scélérat, peux tu m'entendre encor ?
Ma fille, qui vaut plus que ne vaut ta couronne,
Ma fille, qui n'avait fait de mal à personne,
Tu me l'as enviée et prise ! Tu me l'as
Rendue avec la honte,—et le malheur, hélas !
Et bien ! dis, m'entends-tu ? Maintenant, c'est étrange,
Oui, c'est moi qui suis là, qui ris et qui me venge !
Par ce que je feignais d'avoir tout oublié,
Tu t'étais endormi !—Tu croyais donc, pitié !
La colère d'un père aisément édentée !—
Oh ! non ! dans cette lutte, entre nous suscitée,
Lutte du faible au fort, le faible est le vainqueur
Lui, qui léchait tes pieds, il te ronge le cœur."

[See p. 481. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vii., 1855.]

Very well ! Why is Triboulet's not as long as yours ? Do you not imagine that the father, whose daughter has been stolen from him, has not as much to say to the King, as you, a poet, who have not even stolen as much as Alexander stole from the cynic Diogenes—namely, his share of sunshine ?

[See p. 495. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vii., 1855.]

The engagements I have entered into I shall keep, messieurs. Those in authority who are concerned that this discussion shall be conducted with dignity and in order need have no fear of me. I feel neither anger nor animosity. Only, as the police have put a construction on one of my lines which it does not bear and which was never in my mind, I declare that to be an impertinence and more insulting even to the King than to me the poet. I would have the police to understand once for all that I do not write plays with double meanings. Let them fully understand this, because I shall not refer to the question again.

[See p. 498. From the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. vii., 1855.]

When Bonaparte was Consul and Emperor, he also desired despotism, but he acted differently. He did it boldly and openly. He did not make use of any of the wretched little precautionary measures with which nowadays all our liberties are juggled,

older liberties as well as the more recent ones, those of 1830 as well as those of 1789. Napoleon was neither cunning nor a hypocrite; he did not swindle us out of our rights one after the other, under cover of our supineness, as is done now. Napoleon took everything at once at a single bound and single-handed. The lion has not the same methods as the fox.

Those, messieurs, were great times! The Empire, both in its government and in its administration, was undoubtedly an epoch of intolerable tyranny; but let us remember that the loss of our liberty was largely made up for by glory. The attitude of France then, like that of Rome under Cæsar, was, at the same time, both submissive and dignified. It was not France as we like it, a free France, the independent sovereign of herself, but France the slave of one man and mistress of the world.

Then, it is true, our liberty was taken from us; but we were presented with a sublime spectacle. We were told at such a day and hour "I will enter such or such a capital"; and we did enter it, the said day and hour. All sorts of kings elbowed against one another in his ante-chambers. A dynasty was dethroned with one decree of the *Moniteur*. If any one took a fancy for a column, the Emperor of Austria was made to provide the bronze.

The lot of French comedians was, I admit, ruled in rather an arbitrary fashion, but the regulation proceeded from Moscow. As I say, they took away all our liberty, created a bureau of censorship, tore up our books, stripped our play-bills off the walls; but, to all our complaints, they had ready the magnificent reply, Marengo! Jena! Austerlitz!

Those days, I repeat, were great; to-day we are petty. We obey an arbitrary will as then, but we are no longer giants. Our Government is not calculated to console a great nation for the loss of its liberty. In matters of art, we deface the Tuileries; in matters of glory, we let Poland perish. That does not prevent our puny statesmen from handling liberty, as though they were cut out for despots; or from trampling on France as though their shoulders were strong enough to carry the world.

[See p. 539. In the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, vol. viii., 1855, Dumas ends thus:—]

"Now would you like to have an idea of French wit in the year 1825?"

"What do you mean? Does French wit, then, change?"

"Certainly! every ten or fifteen years; that is how it is eternal."

"Then, according to you, witty men are only clever for ten years?"

"Witty men are clever all their lives, for example, Voltaire and M. de Talleyrand. But their wit changes its form, as a serpent changes its skin, often in order to take a more brilliant one than it has cast off."

[And then he prints twenty pages of extracts from a newspaper of 1825 as specimens of "esprit."]

[See p. 540.]

PRÈMIERE LETTRE DE L'HOMME-MOUCHE

A Monsieur le préfet * * *

MONSIEUR LE PRÉFET,—Je prends la liberté de me rappeler à votre souvenir; car vous n'ignorez pas que, depuis dix ans que je suis au bagne de Toulon, je n'ai pas interrompu un seul instant les honorables fonctions que l'on m'a confiées. Cependant, comme il serait possible que vous m'eussiez oubié, je vais vous tracer de nouveau un petit tableau de mon existence physique et morale.

Je m'appelle de * * *; oui, monsieur le préfet, de * * *! Mon nom est précédé de la particule, et j'ai pourtant été confondu avec un tas de coquins obscurs. . . . Mais, hélas! vous le savez comme moi, dans ce monde, à quoi n'est-on pas exposé? Revenons à mon portrait.—Je ne suis ni grand ni petit, ni beau ni laid; j'ai une de ces figures qui s'oublient facilement ce qui est un grand avantage dans notre état, car, si l'on nous reconnaissait toujours, nous serions souvent exposés à des scènes fort désagréables. La nature m'a doué d'un de ces regards obliques que le vulgaire appelle *louches*, mais que nous autres savons apprécier; car, lorsqu'on a l'air de regarder d'un côté, on voit de l'autre. J'ai l'organe de l'ouie trés-développé, et, dans une conversation, pas un mot ne m'échappe. Enfin, ma colonne vertébrale est excessivement souple; ce qui m'a été d'une grande utilité dans mainte occasion. . . . Quant au moral, j'ai l'air le plus engageant du monde: je suis poli, affable, obséquieux même, et je possède la flatterie au plus haut degré; je m'insinue dans l'intérieur des familles, je pénètre les replis les plus cachés du cœur humain: un regard, un demi-mot, me mettent sur la voie, et, quand, malgré tout ma pénétration, tout ma science, je n'ai rien trouvé, alors j'invente!

Grâce à cette réunion d'heureuses qualités, vous eûtes la bonté

de me donner de l'emploi. Criblé de dettes, connu comme un assez mauvais sujet de bon ton . . . vous entendez? un de vos agents qui pouvait m'apprécier me proposa d'entrer dans la grande confrérie; j'acceptai, et ce nouvel état ne servit qu'à développer mon naturel; car je fus accusé pour faux! J'eus beau supplier, intriguer, faire parler en ma faveur par un de mes confrères de Montrouge . . . ; impossible de me disculper: la justice et les tribunaux n'entrent pas, malheureusement, dans tous ces petits intérêts-là; elle ne plaisante jamais. Je fus condamné à dix ans de travaux forcés. Quelle humiliation pour un agent de l'autorité!

A peine arrivé dans ce vast établissement, . . . qui rend réellement d'immenses services à la société, et qu'on devrait nommer autrement, par égard pour nous autres gens bien nés . . . ma figure plut à l'inspecteur de police; il devina mes talents, me fit des propositions. Malgré le vœu que j'avais fait de ne plus servir un pays aussi ingrat, la philanthropie, le désir du bien général, etc., etc., me déterminèrent; mais hélas! quelle décadence, monsieur le préfet! être réduit à examiner la conduite morale et politique des galériens . . . moi qui avais exercé cet état important dans la meilleure société! Vous m'avouerez que c'est très-désagréable. Outre que les agents en chef ne sont pas honnêtres du tout. . . . Au moins, dans la capitale, on gazait les termes; vous nous faisiez appeler agents de l'autorité, voire même du gouvernement, tandis que, là, on vous appelle *mouchards* tout court. . . . Si nous nous plaignons, si nous parlons de notre utilité, on nous compare aux plus vils instruments! Enfin, monsieur le préfet c'était à n'y pas tenir. Heureusement que vous avez bien voulu vous intéresser à moi, pour me faire, le plus tôt possible, sortir de ce vilain endroit, et me promettre de me faciliter les moyens de continuer une carrière que je crois avoir exercée avec honneur et au gré de vos désirs; car j'ai mis à profit le temps que j'ai passé ici. J'ai fait des progrès sensibles en souplesse et en ruse; je sais beaucoup de tours d'adresse que m'ont enseignés ces messieurs, et j'en compte faire usage, non pas pour moi, mais pour le bien public.

Vous voyez, monsieur le préfet, que je suis digne de toute votre estime et de toute votre confiance. Mes talents ont augmenté; j'ai analysé la délation avec fruit, et je suis certain que ma conduite passée vous sera un garant de ma fidélité future à remplir mes devoirs.

Veuillez me faire connaître vos ordres, et ce que vous désirez faire de moi à la sortie du bagne.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, monsieur le préfet, avec la considération la plus distinguée, votre très-humble serviteur,

L'HOMME-MOUCHE

DEUXIÈME LETTRE DE L'HOMME-MOUCHE

A Monsieur le préfet * * *

MONSIEUR LE PRÉFET,—J'ai reçu vos nouveaux ordres, et, grâce à vous, je suis sorti de ce vilain endroit, où je m'ennuyais à la mort ; car j'y étais tout à fait déplacé. J'ai quitté l'uniforme, j'ai changé mon bonnet rouge pour un *trois-pour-cent*. . . . Oh ! pardon monsieur le préfet . . . pardon ! cela m'échappe ! . . . N'allez pas croire au moins que je veuille insulter ce respectable M. de V* * *, notre père à tous, notre bon père ! car c'est lui qui fournit à toutes nos petites dépenses, à votre budget secret. . . . Mais cette expression est si universellement répandue, que je suis excusable.—J'ai donc quitté cette casaque rouge qui m'allait si mal, pour un frac couleur aile de mouche : c'est du dernier goût ; au lieu de cette grosse bague qu'ils m'avaient mise aux jambes (ce qui, entre nous, n'a pas le sens commun), j'en ai une au doigt, fort jolie, sur laquelle est gravé un œil qui n'est pas celui de la Providence. Mon passe-port est en règle . . . " On accordera protection et appui au sieur de * * *, propriétaire . . ." Il est vrai que j'ai fort peu de propriétés, et que je n'en ai même plus du tout, si ce n'est un pot de fleurs avec un rosier . . . que j'ai confiés aux soins d'un ami, à l'époque de mon accident ; mais j'ai mon industrie, votre protection, et c'est quelque chose !

Je me suis mis en route le . . . pour * * *. Je vais tâcher de vous rendre un compte succinct de mon voyage.

J'ai préféré la diligence, parce que, pour nous autres observateurs, le théâtre est plus vaste et les scènes plus variées. J'aurais bien désiré avoir le coin gauche, à cause de mon épaule ; mais la place était prise : il a fallu me contenter du côté droit. En face de moi se trouvaient deux grands militaires porteurs de moustaches effroyables. Je ne sais, mais leur aspect m'importunait . . . je ne pouvais supporter leur regard. . . . A côté d'eux était un prêtre ; et j'avais pour voisins un gros monsieur et une grosse dame. Je commençai par faire semblant de dormir, parce que cela n'empêche pas d'entendre, et qu'on inspire une honnête confiance.

Les deux militaires parlaient à voix basse ; les mots : *Mécontents*.

. . . *Assez de leur service*, etc., etc., frappèrent mon oreille attentive ; je jugeai qu'il était temps de ne plus dormir, je m'éveillai ; je tâchai de provoquer insensiblement une de ces petites inconséquences dont nous faisons si facilement des conspirations . . . Impossible ! je suis forcé de l'avouer. Ils pensaient presque bien. . . . Écoutez notre conversation.

— Ces messieurs sont au service ?

— Nous y étions.

— Ces messieurs ont quitté le service volontairement ?

— Oui, monsieur.

— Ces messieurs ont bien fait ; car, dans le temps où nous sommes, hélas ! comment récompense-t-on la valeur ? . . . Tenez, moi qui vous parle. . . .

— Monsieur a servi ?

— Beaucoup, monsieur ! beaucoup ! même plus que je n'aurais voulu . . . et Dieu sait comment j'ai été récompensé !

— Nous, monsieur, c'est à peu près la même chose. Nous allons en Grèce ; nous offrons notre bras et notre sang ; on accepte, et on ne nous paye pas. . . . Nous manquons vingt fois d'être assassinés ! Alors, nous quittons cette terre inhospitalière, et nous revenons servir le roi dans nos grades respectifs.

— Vous voyez, monsieur le préfet, qu'il n'y avait rien à faire de ce côté.

Je m'adressai au curé. . . . Écoutez encore.

— Monsieur le curé va rejoindre sa paroisse ?

— Oui, monsieur.

— La paroisse de M. le curé est considérable ?

— Non, monsieur.

— Alors, les appointements de M. le curé doivent être fort médiocres ?

— Oui, monsieur.

— Mais c'est affreux, des appointements médiocres ! Comment veut-on que le clergé soutienne le trône si on le paye aussi mal ?

— Monsieur, je ne me plains pas ; car je trouve encore de quoi secourir quelques malheureux.

— Mais, monsieur le curé, secourir les malheureux, sans doute c'est fort beau ; mais vous devez vivre de privations ?

— Monsieur, j'ai fait vœu de charité et d'humilité : je suis fidèle à mon vœu.

— Mais, monsieur le curé, je connais des habitants de Montrouge qui ont aussi fait ce vœu-là, et ça n'empêche pas. . . .

— Monsieur, je n'habite pas Montrouge ; je suis un homme honnête, pieux, et je sais aimer Dieu sans haïr mon prochain.

A ces mots, il se remet à lire son bréviaire.

Il ne me restait qu'à exploiter le gros monsieur et la grosse dame ; ils ronflaient à qui mieux mieux. . . .

Je pris le parti d'éveiller le gros monsieur pour lui demander l'heure : il accueillit ma demande assez peu civilement ; mais il était éveillé, et c'est ce que je voulais. J'engageai la conversation, et j'appris qu'il était électeur. . . . Électeur ! hein ! monsieur le préfet . . . électeur ! quelle mine ! . . . Eh bien, pas du tout. Écoutez encore.

— Peut-on savoir de quel côté monsieur votera ?

— Pardieu ! monsieur, du bon côté.

— Comment, monsieur ? lequel ?

— Y en a-t-il donc tant ? . . . Celui où se trouve l'amour du roi et une juste liberté !

Et de trois ! . . . Vous avouerez, monsieur le préfet, qu'il est excessivement désagréable de perdre ainsi un temps précieux ; aussi, pour l'éviter, je serais assez d'avis de faire surveiller d'abord les deux grands militaires. Ils aiment le roi, c'est bien ; ils sont braves, c'est très-bien ; mais ils ont combattu les Turcs, et c'est suspect.—Et ce prêtre qui fait du bien, qui n'habite pas Montrouge . . . c'est suspect ! très-suspect ! car, enfin, il ne suffit pas d'aimer Dieu et son prochain : il faut savoir se faire respecter.—Quant au gros monsieur, il avait un air goguenard avec son *bon côté !* La grosse dame a rappelé certaine époque où l'on assommait les chiens : j'ai pris cela pour une personnalité. Tenez, si vous m'en croyez, nous dénoncerons toute la voiture ; si ça ne fait pas de mal, ça ne peut pas faire de bien. Vous voyez . . . toujours fidèle à nos principes.

Nous sommes arrivés à ***. J'attends de nouvelles instructions.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, etc.,

L'Homme-Mouche

TROISIÈME LETTRE DE L'HOMME-MOUCHE

A Monsieur le préfet ***

Monsieur le Préfet,—J'ai reçu vos nouveaux ordres à mon arrivée à ***. Je suis logé d'une manière commode et agréable ; j'ai surtout un fort joli cabinet où je *travaille*. Je mange à table

d'hôte, parce qu'on peut mieux *observer*. Le théâtre n'est pas très-bon ; mais il faut bien aller quelque part.

Je vous avouerai que je ne goûte pas du tout la manière de voir des acteurs.

Je vous recommande surtout de faire défendre un pitoyable mélodrame, où l'on pend un espion ; ce n'est pas que je redoute aucune allusion, mais c'est égal, on n'aime pas à voir ce spectacle-là devant les yeux. D'ailleurs, la pièce est immorale, très-immorale !

Il m'est arrivé ici une scène assez bizarre, mais qui prouve combien vos employés, mes confrères, font bien leur devoir.

Je vous demanderai la permission de vous rapporter notre conversation et les réflexions que nos réponses mutuelles nous suggéraient ; car mon confrère m'a communiqué les siennes.

J'étais allé au café prendre ma demi-tasse, parce que cela me donne des idées, agrandit l'imagination ; car vous sentez que nous ne pouvons jamais avoir trop d'imagination. Je prenais donc mon café sur la table qui est près du poële . . . excellente place pour un observateur ! On domine tout, rien ne vous échappe ; on est à peu près caché par le tuyau, et, grâce à cet abri protecteur, on voit sans être vu.

Le café était assez mal composé : des marchands, quelques sous-officiers, de petites gens enfin. Je perdais mon temps, lorsqu'un grand monsieur d'assez mauvaise mine entra dans le café ; ses regards observateurs le parcoururent dans tous les sens ; puis il choisit une table dans un coin écarté, et demanda d'une voix de stentor . . . devinez, monsieur le préfet . . . j'ose à peine vous le dire ! Il demanda *le Constitutionnel !* Vous sentez bien qu'en province, surtout, quand on demande un journal comme celui-là, on est très suspect. Aussi, je m'approchai d'un air engageant, et lui souris agréablement.

Écoutez, monsieur le préfet ; c'est une espèce de scène de comédie.

L'Homme-Mouche.—Monsieur voudrait-il me passer le journal après lui ?

L'Inconnu.—Certainement, monsieur, avec plaisir . . . (*À part.*) Voilà un gaillard qui fait un bien mauvais choix en fait de journaux ! Tachons d'engager la conversation. . . . (*Haut.*) Monsieur va bien s'ennuyer en attendant ! s'il prenait un autre journal ? . . .

L'Homme-Mouche.—Monsieur, je vous avouerai que je ne lis que celui-là.

L'Inconnu, *à part.*—Diable ! que celui-là. . . . Attention ! Cet

homme est suspect. (*Haut.*) Monsieur a bien raison : c'est le seul, l'unique qui pense bien. . . . Seulement, je lui voudrais un peu plus d'énergie.

L'HOMME-MOUCHE, *à part.*—Ceci devient sérieux, trés-sérieux ! . . . (*Haut.*) Certainement, monsieur, je lui voudrais beaucoup plus d'énergie. . . . Car entre nous, ça va mal, très-mal . . . n'est-ce pas ?

L'INCONNU.—Hum ! hum !

L'HOMME-MOUCHE, *à part.*—J'espère que c'est clair ! (*Haut.*) Parbleu ! je le crois bien ! ce M. de V***, entre nous, c'est un. . . .

L'INCONNU, *à part.*—Plus de doute ! (*Haut.*) Comment donc ! et ce M. de C***, c'est un paresseux !

L'HOMME-MOUCHE, *à part.*—Je ne puis décidément plus longtemps supporter un langage aussi opposé à la morale publique. . . . (*Haut.*) Monsieur, je suis désolé, mais j'ai une triste fonction à remplir . . . à remplir envers vous, vu votre manière de penser. . . .

L'INCONNU.—Eh bien, monsieur ?

L'HOMME-MOUCHE.—Eh bien, monsieur, je vous arrête !

L'INCONNU.—Monsieur, ne plaisantez pas avec des choses aussi sacrées ! Dans cet instant, je suis moi-même disposé à vous arrêter.

L'HOMME-MOUCHE. — Comment ! m'arrêter ? . . . Monsieur, connaissez-vous ce signe respectable et respecté ? le connaissez-vous ?

L'INCONNU.—Quoi ! vous seriez ? . . .

L'HOMME-MOUCHE.—Comme vous dites !

L'INCONNU, *montrant sa carte.*—Le tour est charmant ! . . .

L'HOMME-MOUCHE.—Comment ! vous êtes aussi un m. . . . ?

L'INCONNU.—Parole d'honneur . . . foi d'honnête homme !

L'HOMME-MOUCHE.—Touchez là, monsieur ! Sans vous flatter, vous avez été charmant : impossible de réunir plus d'esprit, de finesse et de pénétration !

L'INCONNU.—Et vous donc ! comme vous lancez le mot de temps en temps !

L'HOMME-MOUCHE.—Et votre *hum ! hum !* quelle profondeur, quel génie dans votre *hum !*

L'INCONNU.—Et puis, il faut l'avouer, vous avez tout à fait le ton de bonne compagnie : je vous prenais au moins pour un courtier marron !

L'HOMME-MOUCHE.—Vous êtes trop indulgent ! . . . Si un petit verre pouvait vous être agréable ! . . .

L'inconnu accepta le petit verre, et me mit au fait de quelques petites intrigues d'en je vous donnerai connaissance.

Vous voyez, monsieur le préfet, avec quel zèle nous nous occupons du bien public.

J'attends de nouveaux ordres.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, etc., L'HOMME-MOUCHE

QUATRIÈME ET DERNIÈRE LETTRE DE L'HOMME-MOUCHE

A Monsieur le préfet * * *

MONSIEUR LE PRÉFET,—Vous avez été instruit de l'accident qui m'a forcé de revenir dans la capitale : ça commence à aller un peu mieux ; seulement, les reins sont encore bien faibles. . . . Enfin, n'y pensons plus ! . . . mais je l'ai échappé belle ; une canne grosse comme le bras ! Ah ! ciel ! j'en frissonne encore. . . .

Revenons à nos affaires.

Comme, dans la capitale, chaque instant offre un sujet d'observation, je vais tout bonnement vous tracer un petit journal de ma journée.

Je me suis levé à neuf heures ; j'ai appelé mon petit Brisquet. . . . Quel bon chien ! quel chien estimable ! monsieur le préfet, vous n'en avez pas d'idée. D'abord, il *rapporte* trés-bien ; il a un nez . . . quel nez ! il sent un suspect d'une lieue à la ronde . . . et il arrête supérieurement ! . . . je ne fais pas mieux.

J'ai été déjeuner dans un cabaret de la rue Montorgueil. Un cabaret ! direz-vous, monsieur le préfet ; quel mauvais genre ! . . . Comment un homme de bon ton peut-il fréquenter un tel endroit ? Eh bien, détrompez-vous : ce cabaret est quelquefois le rendez-vous de jeunes élégants du café de *Paris*, qui viennent y manger des huîtres fraîches et boire du vin blanc. J'attendis quelque temps. Rien ne me paraissait digne de fixer mon attention, lorsque j'entendis du bruit dans l'escalier, et que je vis monter quatre jeunes gens ; ils avaient l'air un peu défait : leur toilette était négligée. . . . J'y suis : ils sortent du bal, du jeu, etc., etc. Écoutons.

— Que demanderons-nous ?

— Des huîtres, du vin blanc et une soupe au madère.

— Pas autre chose ?

— Ici, il n'y a que cela de supportable. . . . A propos, mon cher, sais-tu qu'on devrait faire fermer ce maisons honnêtes où l'on

vous vole votre argent, et dont les maîtresses vivent du produit du flambeau ! Autrefois, si l'on y allait, on était sûr au moins d'y trouver bonne compagnie . . . en hommes ; mais, maintenant, qu'y voyez-vous ? Des gens fardés, des fripons et même des mouchards !

J'irai là, monsieur le préfet.

L'entretien roula sur les femmes, les chevaux . . . le vocabulaire ordinaire de ces messieurs. Ils s'en allèrent en se donnant rendez-vous pour le bal de l'Opéra.

J'allai faire un tour aux Tuileries, aux Champs-Élysées . . . voir si je ne pourrais pas mal interpréter un pantalon . . . ou dénoncer un chapeau. Oui, monsieur le préfet . . . n'avons-nous pas eu les habillements politiques : les quirogas, les bolivars, etc. ? Je ne remarquai qu'un gros monsieur en *trois-pour-cent* ; j'eus d'abord envie de faire quelque attention à lui ; mais j'appris qu'il arrivait de province. . . . Alors, je vis qu'il était coiffé sans intention politique.

Je fus à la Bourse : c'étaient, comme à l'ordinaire, des entrepreneurs en faillite, des goujats se vendant trois ou quatrecent mille livres de rente, et s'empruntant trente sous pour aller dîner !

Cinq heures sonnèrent. Je me rendis au café *Anglais*. Quel désappointement pour un observateur ! J'arrive, je me trouve seul ; j'espère que la foule va arriver : personne ne vient, excepté un monsieur qui demande un poulet à la Marengo, et un autre un potage à la Colbert. . . . À la Colbert ! il me semble que c'est un peu insultant pour M. de V*** ; nous verrons. Mais, comme ils étaient seuls, il n'y eut pas de conversation.

Je fus, de là, aux Variétés. Rien de marquant. Mauvaise journée, monsieur le préfet ; elle finira mal. Cependant, j'y pense, vous avez toléré une chose bien extraordinaire : votre M. Odry, avec sa chanson des gendarmes ! Mais c'est direct, cela, monsieur le préfet, c'est direct. . . . Les gendarmes n'obéissent qu'à l'impulsion qu'on leur donne ; cette impulsion est produite par un autre ; remontez à la source, et vous verrez que rien n'est sacré pour M. Odry !

En sortant du spectacle, je fus dans une maison de jeu. Il n'y a guère à observer dans ces endroits (aussi c'est de l'un d'eux que je vous écris, ne sachant que faire de mon temps), parce que les croupiers, etc., sont nos confrères. . . . Mais quelquefois on voit le jeune homme s'y présenter pour la première fois. . . . Il rougit, porte à la ronde des yeux timides, et tremble de rencontrer un regard de connaissance ; sa vue s'arrête surtout avec crainte sur le banquier . . . Si on allait l'expulser, l'empêcher de perdre l'or, fruit d'un emprunt usuraire ! . . .

Le banquier m'appelle ; justement, il venait d'entrer un de ces jeunes gens.

— Mon cher, me dit-il (je connais beaucoup ce banquier, nous avons *servi* ensemble), ce jeune homme a de l'or, beaucoup d'or ! mes renseignements sont pris ; mais il est timide, il tente la fortune d'une main tremblante. Donnez-lui l'exemple ; rendez-nous ce petit service ; car, vous savez, vous et nous, c'est tout un. Prenez ces dix mille francs ; jouez comme vous voudrez ; perdez, gagnez : l'exemple agira sur lui, et il mordra à l'hameçon !

Je pris les billets. . . . Le banquier s'apprèta à lancer la bienheureuse boule. Le confrère a un poignet d'enfer ; c'est comme un coup de pistolet, et . . .

(Ici, le manuscrit est interrompu ; on lit la lettre suivante :)

Monsieur le Préfet,—L'Homme-Mouche n'est plus ! un malheur effroyable vient d'arriver ! Le banquier allait lancer la fatale boule de roulette ; mais, au moment où son bras vigoureux lui donnait l'impulsion, elle lui a échappé des mains, est allée frapper à la tête notre malheureux ami, et il est tombé mort dans mes bras, victime de son attachement à ses devoirs.

Quelle perte, monsieur le préfet !

Je vous envoie ci-jointe une lettre, sa carte, sa médaille, etc., etc.

Si vous aviez de confiance en moi pour me donner sa place (car il avait un grade au-dessus de moi), je vous en aurais la plus grande obligation. . . . Il y a huit ans que je végète dans les emplois, et, étant aussi bien élevé que le défunt, je puis prétendre à le remplacer.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, etc.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The Brussels edition of the Memoirs, which has been taken as the basis of this translation, ends with p. 571 of the present volume. The three chapters which follow are taken from the eighth volume of the Paris edition of the *Souvenirs*, 1855, in order to arrive at a more convenient finish. The last chapter of the eighth volume of the Paris edition has been here omitted, as it concerns itself mainly with a recapitulation of the story of the Wars of the Roses.

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